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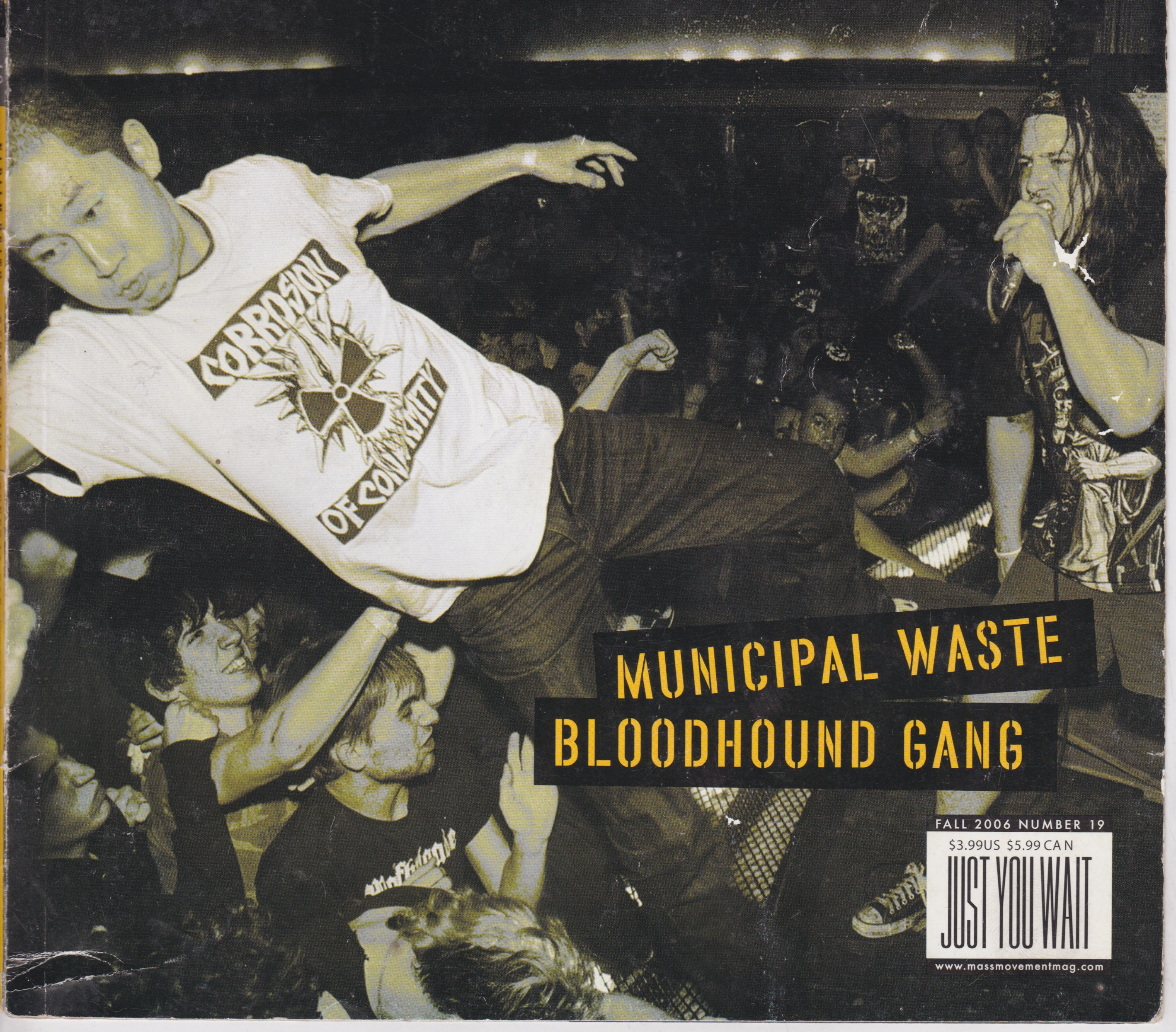
MASS MOVEMENT

MAGAZINE

ISSUE 19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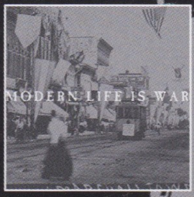
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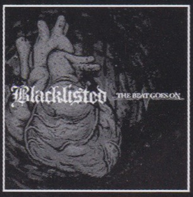
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Rise and Fall

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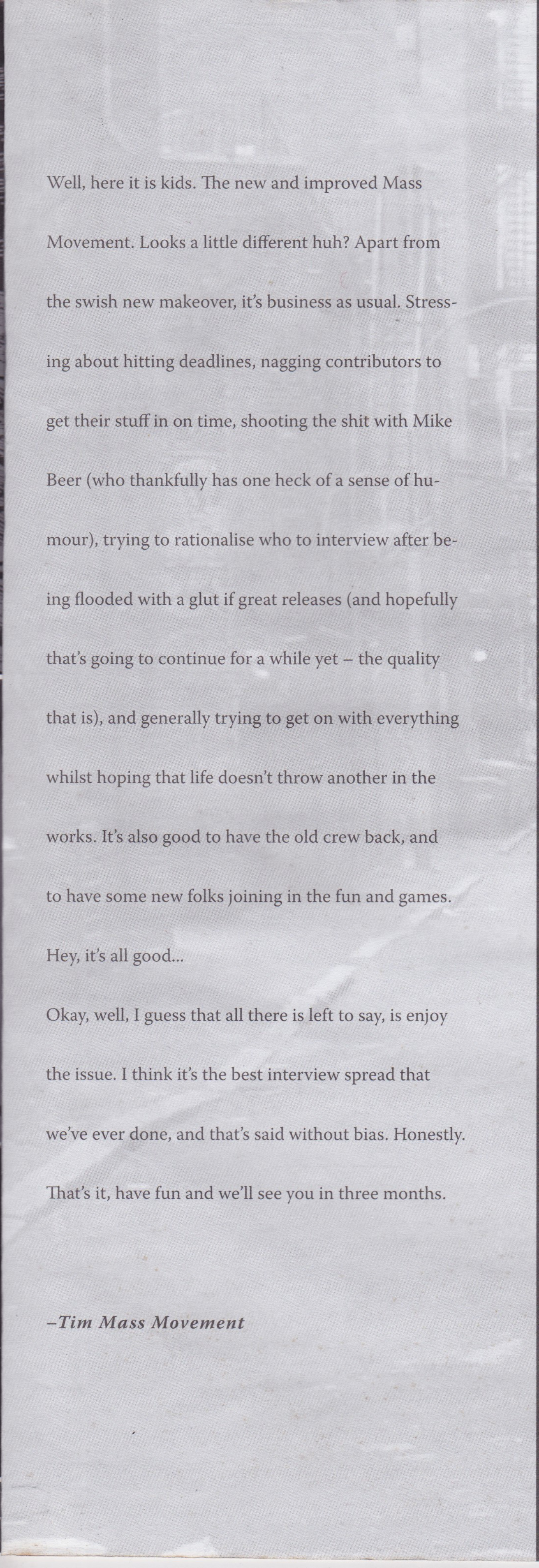

Well, here it is kids. The new and improved Mass Movement. Looks a little different huh? Apart from the swish new makeover, it's business as usual. Stressing about hitting deadlines, nagging contributors to get their stuff in on time, shooting the shit with Mike Beer (who thankfully has one heck of a sense of humour), trying to rationalise who to interview after being flooded with a glut if great releases (and hopefully that's going to continue for a while yet – the quality that is), and generally trying to get on with everything whilst hoping that life doesn't throw another in the works. It's also good to have the old crew back, and to have some new folks joining in the fun and games. Hey, it's all good...

Okay, well, I guess that all there is left to say, is enjoy the issue. I think it's the best interview spread that we've ever done, and that's said without bias. Honestly. That's it, have fun and we'll see you in three months.

–Tim Mass Movement

MASS MOVEMENT

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Mass Movement #19 is dedicated to the memory of Randy "Biscuit" Turner, Ronald Coleman and Pig Champion.
Always with us and never forgotten.

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P.O.B. 26035, MILWAUKEE, WI 53226-0035

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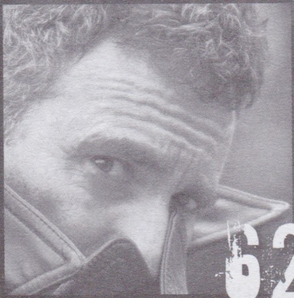
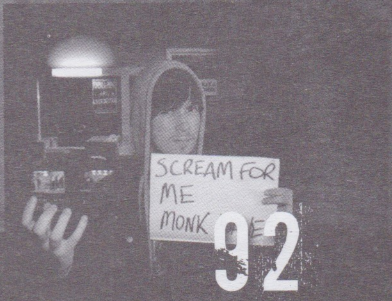
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AL QUINT

On the occasion of my first column for the new 'n improved Mass Fucking Movement, I have a new header photo. I wish I was still that skinny. I probably weighed 125 lbs (a shade under 9 stone for you Brits). I won't tell you how much I weigh now but, trust me, it's quite a bit more. At least I still have all my hair. Look at that scowling visage—such a badass, eh? Yeah, right. I was a scrawny runt afraid of his own shadow, completely un-worldly, wet behind the ears. I was 20 years old at the time and in between my sophomore and junior year of college but would often run home to the parents' house on the weekends because dorm life was so wretched. I couldn't WAIT to get the fuck out of that particular dorm by the end of the year. Come to think of it, that pattern repeated itself for the entire four years of school.

That photo was taken in the summer of 1980 while I was lounging by a pool in New Hampshire. My family used to have a house/cottage up there and, when I wasn't swimming, I spent quite a bit of time sitting by that pool, listening to tapes and attempting to school people on the wonders of punk rock, at least since 1978 when I'd been into the music for almost a year. Not too many people liked that stuff but they also left me alone. That's a Cure pin on my torso and, no, I didn't stick it into my flesh. Hell, I didn't even get my ear pierced until 1984. A kid named Peter took the photo and a few others and gave them to me a few summers later. That's the best of them. I still have that Cure pin in one of my two tackle boxes of old and new pins—one of the few survivors from back when I first started collecting them.

There was a store on Newbury Street in Boston called Newbury Comics that I stumbled upon one day. It was a comics store and they'd just started selling pins and other punk paraphernalia and they had boxes of 7"s on top of the counter. Of course, anyone from my area is familiar with Newbury as a large local chain, with about 25 stores the last time I checked. It's a multi-million dollar business and has little resemblance the its humble origins although one of the two original partners, Mike Dreese, still owns the chain. I generally don't shop there anymore, myself, since their prices are high and I'd rather get my records from mailorder distributors, people at shows or smaller mom & pop record stores, although those are pretty well picked over around here.

But, getting back to 1980 and that Cure pin—it was before the Cure had really broken in the States. I'd taped "Jumping Someone Else's Train," "It's Not You," "Another Journey By Train," "Boys Don't Cry" and "A Forest" off the radio. The summer of '80 was kind of a 'tweener' time for punk—after the initial rush of '77 and about a year before I started getting into hardcore. I was listening to the Ruts' "Staring At The Rude Boys," Mission of Burma's "Academy Fight Song," Stiff Little Fingers "Nobody's Heroes" LP, the Undertones "Hypnotised" LP. Mainly, I played my mix tapes, with material culled from various cool college radio shows. There was a phenomenal show called "Depraved Dave's Cave" hosted by a character called Dave Dodge on the Salem State College station WMWM. That's where I first heard the Dead Kennedys' "California Über Alles" that summer and it made me realize that true punk rock was alive and well. I heard more obscure bands such as Genral Foodz (who would go on to become the more hardcore PTL Klub) and the Transplants, with their cool song "Suicidal Tendencies," even cool power pop such as the DB's "Black and White." I was working in a convenience store and I now look back fondly on songs that didn't immediately register with me then—the new wavish OMD's "Messages," New Musik's "This World Of Water," Tuxedomoon's "What Use" and Crash Course In Science's weird "Kitchen Motors," all heard on a great show called "Niteklub" on Emerson College's WERS, which has gone way into the shitter in recent years, except for a few shows. So those are the memories that come to mind while examining that photo. I'm still here and proud to be into punk/hardcore/whatever. I staunchly believe in the spirit of DIY. Doing it for yourself—it remains an inspiration. I wish I could focus enough to get my own zine, Suburban Voice, going again. It's been two years. A parade of life setbacks. I'm sure people are tired of hearing excuses but that's the way it is. I manage to get my columns in on time for this zine and the others I contribute to and my pride and joy remains my radio show Sonic Overload. In fact, I had to take the DIY route to keep that show going, as I mentioned in the last column and the show seems to have expanded its audience since I started doing it that way.

*****

Speaking of setbacks, I started having some health issues earlier this year—spells where I'd feel disoriented for 20-30 seconds and then come out of it. I wouldn't lose consciousness but would lose track of what time/day it was. Generally, once the episodes (or "attacks" as I call them) ended, I'd be OK. They only happened at home and, for the most part, just early in the day after I'd been sleeping for awhile. I told the nurse at my doctor's office about the attacks and she had me see a neurologist. I had to wait a month and a half to see him, during which time the attacks continued but, once I explained my situation, he had an MRI and an EEG test run on me within 48 hours and saw me again within a week. Fortunately, the brain tests didn't reveal anything abnormal about my brain (you can insert your joke here) but he mentioned the possibility I'm having low-level seizures. He started me on some medication and, while I've had the occasional attack, there's been improvement. The downside is the medication makes me sleepy and spacy at times.

I'm trying to take it in stride... friends and family I've told about this situation almost seem freaked out by it. Actually, to be honest, it kind of gnaws at my mind, as well, because I've never had anything like this happen before. With my father's death last year and these health problems, it's inevitable to start thinking about one's mortality and wonder what the hell's going on with my body. The neurologist didn't really offer an explanation as to what's causing these episodes. So I'm trying to sort it out, keep it under control. And, at the same time, stay on top of my work. Because it's important to me—I want to keep publishing my zine. Every time I see a cool new zine show up in the mailbox, I get a bit envious because it's been so long since I published. I feel guilty about it. People are always mentioning they want to see me publish again, that I can't quit now. I'll try to do something about that.

And the health problems (the "attacks" aren't the only thing) make me realize that I'd be completely fucked without health insurance. More accurately, I'm on my wife Ellen's coverage. I couldn't afford the office visits or various prescriptions that enable me to function day to day. I cringe at thinking there are people in this country who have similar problems and can't afford to take care of themselves. Health coverage should be guaranteed—no one should be denied coverage due to their economic situation. But with our free market-loving government, corrupted by the gigantic health care and insurance industries, that's not going to happen anytime soon.

Nothing's going to crush my spirit—I'm trying not to let it happen. In the past few weeks, I've seen bands with members who are in their 40s... some are touring the DIY way, some playing clubs but they're all out there kicking ass. Seein Red, from Holland, came through town a few weeks ago with Kriegstanz, who include Jos from Seein Red and the rippin' Bury The Living from Tennessee. I'm pretty sure all the guys in Seein' Red are in their 40s and they started playing music over 20 years ago, most notably with Lärm. Still angry at the world, remaining committed to expressing themselves through words and ferocious music. Doing it the DIY way—their show in Boston was at a record store. It was also inspiring seeing the Adolescents a few nights later. The show was at one of my least favorite clubs in Boston, Axis, although it wasn't as oppressive an environment as in the past, although I hate bogus backstage areas and stage barricades. While only Steve Soto and Tony were there from the old days, they had some new blood along with them—19 year old Frank Agnew, Jr. and 15 year old Joe Harrison, who had to replace Frank Agnew, Sr. at the last minute when the latter had knee surgery. I was wondering if they could pull it off and it was a pleasant surprise. They fucking NAILED it—every riff and guitar lead played with perfection and the two kids had the moves. And, if you think about it, when the Adolescents were starting out, they were also fairly young. Rikk Agnew and Casey Royer were in their 20s but the others were teenagers. They ripped through just about the entire first album, a few off the 7" and second album and the best three songs from the new "OC Confidential." The Adolescents first album has been kicking my ass for over 20 years and it was great to hear those songs still played with vibrant spirit.

Equally vibrant were the Subhumans a few days after that show. Once again, fuck the barriers and backstage area—I didn't even get to talk to Dick from the Subhumans, but they also played an energetic set. Once again, people in my age range for whom the first still burns deeply. No sense they're going through the motions. The message remaining strong and as relevant now as it did back then—which I suppose is sad commentary on the times in which we live. "Remember the day the country died," indeed—that applies to the US and with what's been happening in the UK, with the recent bombings. "No" is still a potent shout of defiance and it felt cathartic to sing along with every word because, goddamn it, in the face of everything, I still remain defiant! From Ashes Rise, on their last tour (or so they say) were also loud and powerful. Once again, the stage barricade affects the intimacy—this is a band I've seen in basement and hall spaces and having them right in front of me was a better way to see them but, still, their sheer wall of fury pounds right through your skull.

*****

As always, much praise to Tim for giving me this space to rant. If you want to get in touch with me, e-mail is suburbanvoice@earthlink.net and the old-fashioned way is Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903. The site for Sonic Overload radio is http://sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com

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Also available loads of other "classic" punk and hardcore (read: musically inept old cruddy recordings) retrospectives from people who went on to become middle aged over weight depressed insurance salesmen. I mean let's face it, most of these guys are barely clinging to life and their children hate them. Everyday we here at GTA look fondly upon the day we didn't invest in some silly online auction site and instead decided to waste our business degrees from Harvard on musicians who reek of failure. Let's open another bottle of champagne, its great to be filthy rich!

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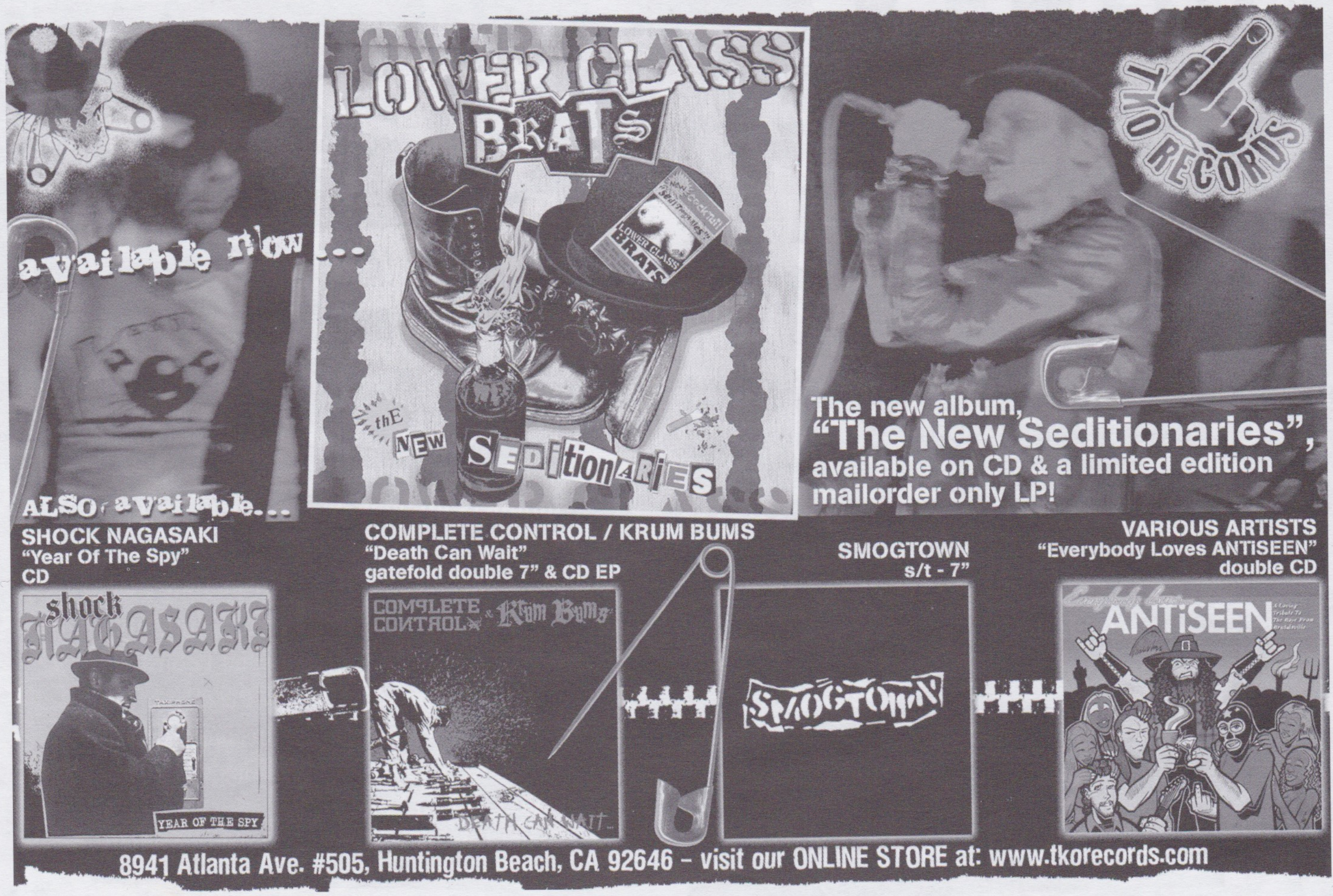
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MUNICIPAL WASTE

Okay, so I guess most of you might have noticed the Crossover thread running through this issue (and I make no apologies for it either...), and what would a Crossover themed issue be without Municipal Waste? Exactly! So, here they are in all their, uh, "glory" for your reading pleasure...

Interview by Tim

MM: Alright, time to get those gums flapping. Say hello to all the boys and girls and tell them a little something about yourself - what's the most bizarre thing about your personality, and when your numbers up, how do you want to take the express elevator to Hades?

Tony: Hello boys and girls I'm Tony I sing for the Waste. The most bizarre thing about my personality is probably that I constantly think about pizza. Death by Pizza!

Dave: I am Dave, play drums and love cats. I want to be thrown to the lions when I go.

Phil: I'm Phil I play bass,

Ryan: I'm a Hesher by nature and I supply

the shred. My name is Ryan.

MM: Face the Waste - so, spill your guts and bring us up to speed with the history of Municipal Waste. When, where how and why did you guys get together? What made you want to play in the first place and what inspires you to keep playing?

Ryan: We started in a dirty ass garage space behind my house at the time, which was a filth ridden place itself. It was a suiting birthplace for the Waste. We wanted to do something fast and pissed off with a speed metal edge. I hadn't heard anything recently that brought that intensity and I figured we could attempt to bring that back with the Waste.

Tony: We played our first gig on New Years Eve at some crazy ass house show. Ever since we've been writing and playing shows constantly. We've been through some lineup changes but now I feel we are at our strongest.

MM: I was kinda curious about the European tour - how did it go? How did Europe differ from the States, and what if anything do you think that the European tour taught you about yourselves as people and what if anything did you learn about being in a band?

Ryan: People in Europe definitely have their act together as far as taking care of bands. Plus we loved the beer and hash that was provided almost everywhere. I think I was too drunk to learn anything about myself, except that Europe rules!

Tony: I saw a ton of sights and learned about a lot of different cultures… okay, I'm lying I fell down drunk a lot!

MM: Right, how did the whole Earache thing come about? Who approached who, and what do you think it was about Municipal Waste that sold the band to the home of Death Metal, and what can you tell us about the new record?

Ryan: Earache approached us first. We had a friend in the New York office who sent "Waste 'Em All" over to the UK office and they loved it. I grew up listening to countless Earache bands, so I was honored to be asked to join the label. The new record is a shred fest. Be warned.

MM: The inevitable drummer question. Just how the hell did you manage to get Dave Witte in Municipal Waste? Are the rumours of kidnap, extortion, bribery and copious amounts of alcohol and ganja actually true, or just some twisted fabrication?

Dave: I moved to Richmond, VA for my girlfriend and the Waste happened to need a drummer. I was a fan of what they were doing and had so much fun going out for a weekend with them that I decided to join, it brings me back to where I came from and I love it.

MM: Alright, time to talk recorded output - just how many damn comps and splits have you guys done?

Tony: Okay, I'll try to give our discography a shot off the top of my head but I'm sure I'll forget something...here goes nothing!

- *Municipal Waste ST/7" (300 on green vinyl) Amendment/Busted Heads*
- *Municipal Waste/Crucial Unit Split 12/ CD Six Weeks Records*
- *Municipal Waste/Bad Acid Trip Split 7" Amendment Records*
- *Dark Thoughts "A Tribute to C.O.C." Rabid Dog Records*
- *Super Sabado Fest Comp 12" Six Weeks Records*
- *Municipal Waste "Waste Em All" Six Weeks Records*
- *Louder Than Hell 7" comp Six Weeks Records*
- *Municipal Waste "Hazardous Mutation"*

MM: So, where do those song titles ("Thrash? Don't Mind If I Do", "Thrashing's My Business And Business Is Good" etc.) come from? Who dreams them up, and what kind of locoweed was being smoked during the creative process? Why are monsters, ghouls, goblins, bombs, nuclear devastation, axes and violence so much cooler than talking about your feelings and being you know, sensitive? I gotta know, what's the deal with "The Kite Song"?

Dave: Everyone else is fucking serious so why should we be?
Tony: We feel that we can relate more to singing about monsters and shit than singing about some political tripe we know nothing about. Not that there's anything wrong with that we just feel that we can leave that sort of thing to the kids with Crass tattoos. Coming up with our song titles is usually a huge group effort. Someone usually comes up with a title and then we take it to our committee which decides on whether its "tight" or not. Then our committee passes the title down to a panel of judges. Then the judges smack our tits into oblivion and BLAMM THE TITLE IS BORN!!!
Ryan: The Kite song was written and sung by Andy Waste as you can tell he has the Voice of an angel.

MM: Hate to start thinking about tags and genrefication, but how do you guys see the band? Metal? Hardcore? Crossover? Why? How comfortable are you being tagged as "Party Thrash"?

Dave: However people see us it's fine, some of the comparisons are obvious but at the end of the day, it's us doing what we love, playing music and having fun with it.
Tony: I'd rather be tagged "Party Thrash" than "Rappy Bass Metal".

MM: Why do you think we're starting to see a resurgence in the whole Crossover movement? Why do you think it's suddenly becoming popular again, and bands are actually starting to utilize and play that style once more?

Dave: I don't think we are out to restart the movement, if it happens great but we are simply doing what we do. I could see why kids and people would want to re-embrace this scene though. The metal and hardcore scene is so saturated with fly by night bands concentrated on image and stardom that it's really effecting the quality of music today, like grunge in the early 90's it's the same thing over and over again and people are becoming tired and burned out on it. It's not fun anymore and that's what it's all about I think, bringing back the fun in music and being excited.

MM: I'm a firm believer in the epiphany, or life changing moment - have you ever-experienced one? If so, what was it and how did it affect you? Have you got a credo or philosophy by which you try to live, and if so, what is it?

Tony: A couple of weeks ago I did a back flip onto a coffee table at a party. I was really drunk at the time and a misjudged my flip and landed directly on my neck. I couldn't feel my arms and legs and I couldn't move anything. Girls we're crying and shit and I really thought I was paralyzed. I eventually got my feeling back and a brutal case of banger's neck but ever since then I developed a strong "Don't do back flips onto coffee table's" philosophy.

MM: How does what you know about the world differ from what you thought it would be like as a child, and if there was one thing that you could change about society as a whole, what would it be and why?

Tony: Tim you getting a little sensitive on me? Wanna start cuddling after the inter-

SOMETHING TO SAY
A GLOBAL THREAT

view? Does someone need a huggy?

MM: Are happiness and contentment merely "States Of Mind", or are they an unachievable dream perpetuated by the media and our own desire to find some meaning and clarity in and from life? Is there such a thing as "The American Dream" (the rags to riches story). If so, justify and if not why not? Why does that story have such lasting appeal?

Tony: Dude I'm falling asleep over here! Ask us a question about The Accused or something.

MM: What's your idea of a perfect day? What would you do given twenty-four hours of total freedom, and why would you do it?

Dave: Drink great Belgian beer, eat chocolate. Go to the zoo and see the big cats. Life is simple for me.

Tony: I would run naked through a field of flowers while midgets throw heroin soaked grapes at me.

MM: In fifty words or less, why are The Accused one of the baddest damn bands on the face of the planet?

Dave: They take all the elements of punk, metal, hardcore, rock and some jazz and make them all work, no one sounds like The Accused. A timeless great.

MM: Time for the TV dream - what's the best TV show if all time and what makes it so much better than all the rest?

Tony: I'm obsessed with Seinfeld I have no idea why. I watch that shit at least an hour a day. I almost started an all Seinfeld hardcore band where all our songs would be about the show. I wanted to call it "Sack Lunch".

MM: The inevitable Pro Wrestling question - is it just a glorified soap opera, or serious sports entertainment? Why?

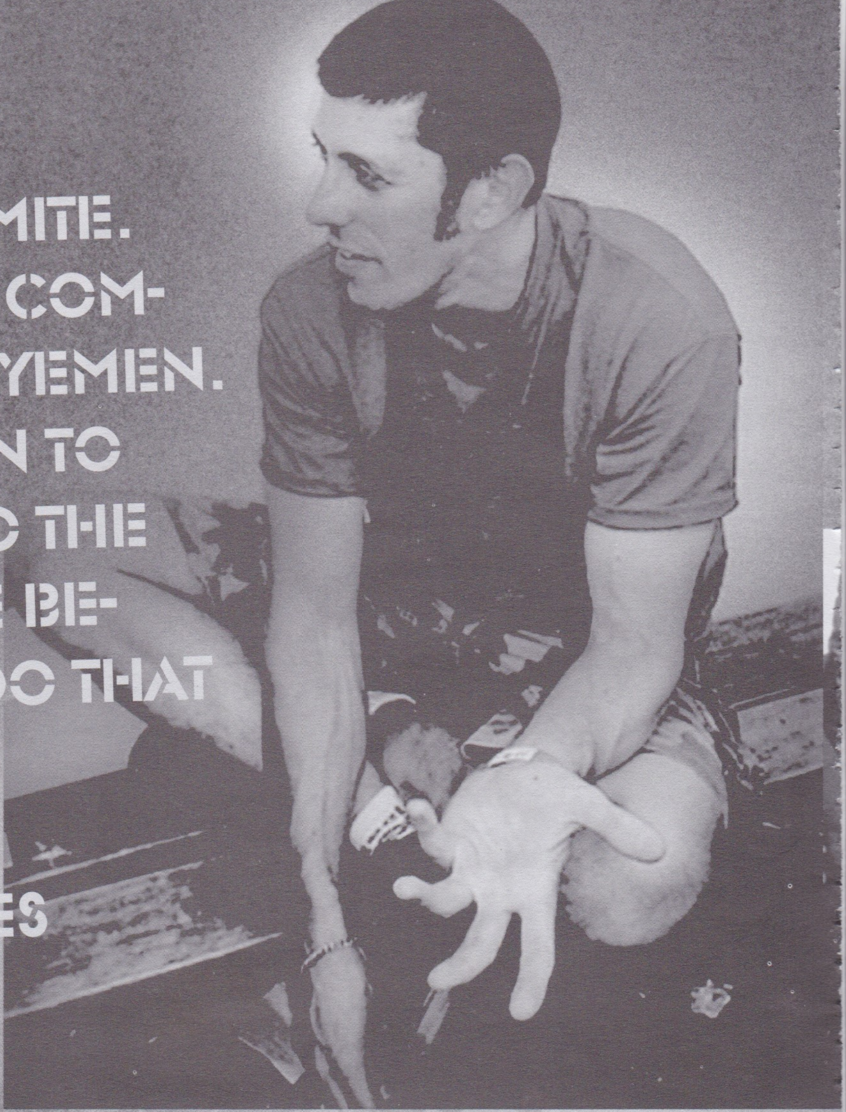
Phil: Wrestling is very, very real.
Tony: Me and Phil are starting out in the minors soon and pretty in no time we will be power bombing the big dogs!

MM: What's next for Municipal Waste?

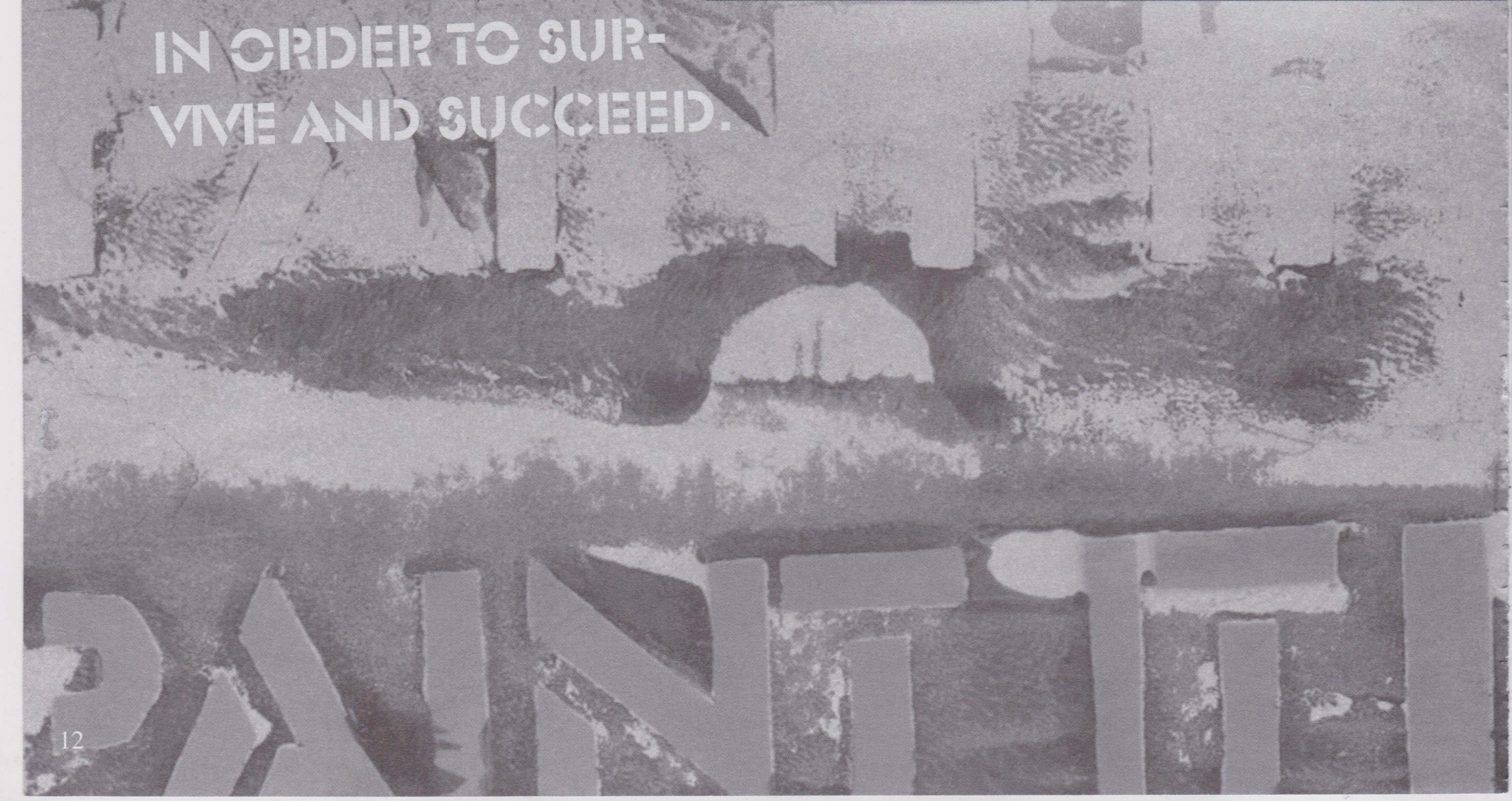
Dave: Lots of touring.
Tony: All we want to do is write killer songs and tour our balls off

MM: Any last thrash inspired words of wisdom for the people in crossover land?

Tony: Diarrhea...the timeless joke
Dave: See you on tour.



LIFETIME. KID DYNAMITE. PAINT IT BLACK. THE COMMON FACTOR? DAN YEMEN. A MAN ON A MISSION TO BRING HC HOME, TO THE PEOPLE WHO ONCE BELIEVED, AND STILL DO THAT HC DOESN'T NEED TO STAY UNDERGROUND, NOR DOES IT NEED MTV SOFTENING IT'S PUNCH IN ORDER TO SURVIVE AND SUCCEED.



I CAUGHT WITH DAN IN BRISTOL BEFORE PAINT IT BLACK TORE THROUGH A SET OF FEROCIOUS OLD SCHOOL HC IN THE FRONT ROOM OF A SMALL PUB…

Interview by Tim

MM:FORTHEBENEFITOFTHOSEWHODON'T KNOWWHOYOUARE,WHYDONTYOUINTRODUCE YOURSELF…
Dan: My name's Dan and I sing and write the songs for Paint It Black.

MM: WHAT PART OF YOUR PERSONALITY DO YOU TRY TO KEEP SUBMERGED IN THE DARKEST PART OF YOUR SOUL, THAT IS PRE-SUPPOSING YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE IN THE CONCEPT OF THE HUMAN SOUL?
Dan: That's a really densely layered question. Do you want to talk about whether I believe in the concept of the human soul, or what parts I keep hidden?

MM: THE PARTS YOU KEEP HIDDEN…
Dan: I think that I try to keep my anxious, fearful and uptight self hidden because those are the qualities I find unpleasant in other people and I find them unpleasant in myself, although they are a part of my personality.

MM: DO YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE IN THE CONCEPT OF THE SOUL?
Dan: It depends on how you operationalize that.

MM: THAT WHICH LINGERS AFTER DEATH.
Dan: No.

MM: WHAT'S YOUR SECRET VICE?
Dan: An occasional cigarette. I don't actually smoke in front of the band members. They're all straight edge. No one has a problem with me drinking but I know that no-one respects this particularly suicidal vice.

MM: HOW DO YOU THINK PAINT IT BLACK DIFFERS FROM LIFETIME AND KID DYNAMITE ON A MUSICAL AND PERSONAL LEVEL?
Dan: On a musical level I would think it would be obvious…

MM: ALMOST LIKE A REGRESSION…
Dan: I actually think of it as a progression. I would challenge the idea of regression. Just because most of my peers mellow with age…

MM: I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT MELLOWING, I MEAN REGRESSION IN THE SENSE THAT THE SOUND IS TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THAT EARLY 80S FIRST INFLUX OF HARDCORE…
Dan: I can see that…Although the interesting thing is when Lifetime went from mediocre to good is when we – to use your word – regressing and linking more directly to, like, Seven Seconds and the Clash, Stiff Little Fingers and Elvis Costello rather than listening to.. well when we started out we were a confused mess, we wanted to be melodic and set our selves apart from a lot of what was going on at the time which was either stale rehash or really posturing tough guy – "Ok look at me with my pitbull on a chain underneath a graffitied bridge in my press picture" really negative, thuggish. In the early '90s that's what East Coast hardcore was…. And it persists. When people say NYC now they mean, like, Killing Time. When I say NYC I think of like an anecdote or like Sick of It All. You listen to the first SOIA 7inch now it sounds like a punk record. Anyway we were trying to set ourselves apart from that, but other than that we didn't really know what we were. We knew what we wanted but we were mostly listening to our contemporaries like Verbal Assault, Dag Nasty, you know contemporaries but bands that were around still at the time. And when Lifetime started getting good, just when we released our own 7inch in '94 and then soon after, we were like "wait a minute, why are we listening to bands who are around now when we were more directly influenced by, really Elvis Costello, The Buzzcocks and stuff like that. So if anything there were elements in common – stripping it back to basics but also trying to take from that aesthetic and produce something original, which I think is still what I'm trying to do. If anything, of the three bands, I'd say Kid Dynamite was the most traditional – that was deliberately traditional.

MM: YEAH THAT KIND OF SHOCKED ME AFTER LISTENING TO LIFETIME, WHEN THE KID DYNAMITE RECORD WAS RELEASED. I KIND OF HAD A DIFFERENT

IDEA OF HOW KID DYNAMITE WOULD SOUND BEFORE I LISTENEDTO THE BAND

Dan: What did you think – that it would be more like Lifetime?

MM: YES

Dan: Yeah, a lot of people thought so. If you think about it, if you really put yourself in my shoes, what would be the point. Plus Lifetime was a direct artefact of the people involved, I mean without Art I couldn't even hope to do anything even remotely like that. Also I had soured a little on really striving for the melodic and I really wanted to strip it down and do something more aggressive after Lifetime; and after Kid Dynamite I wanted to strip it down even more and get way more aggressive, more directly political as well

MM: ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, HOW DO YOU THINK IT DIFFERS?

Dan: Well I'm writing the lyrics, and I think also the impetus for Paint It Black came from a pretty dramatic event in my life, I mean I hadn't done music for at least a year and a half. I guess I'd given up after my second band, Kid Dynamite split up just on the verge of exploding and I'd been to University and Graduate school after that, I studied psychology, and I thought maybe this is a sign and I'll be a real adult and work. I was working a 60hour week at my chosen profession then I got married then I had a pretty serious medical problem – a stroke – then I had to, you know..... None of us probably know too many people who have come close to death at this age, each of us probably knows a couple, it certainly causes you to re-evaluate what's important. I found myself maybe feeling the lack of balance in my life. There's a certain way you express yourself as a musician that doesn't really happen in any other part of your life. I just took the stroke as a sign that my life was out of balance. From that directly, I decided to start this band, I was angry at fate, fortune everything. The kind of anger that you have no one to direct it at.

> "OKLOOKATMEWITHMYPITBULLONACHAINUNDERNEATHAGRAFFITIEDBRIDGEINMYPRESSPICTURE" REALLYNEGATIVE,THUGGISH.INTHE EARLY'90STHAT'SWHATEASTCOAST HARDCOREWAS...ANDITPERSISTS.

MM: YOU DON'T THINK YOU BROUGHT ANY PERSONAL BAGGAGE TO THE NEW BAND?

Dan: Oh yeah I certainly did, the launching impulse was totally different. I definitely got back into it. I guess I feel like I was in some kind of magic groove. Certainly I couldn't have had anyone ten years younger writing the lyrics, no disrespect to Jason at all, it's just that at this point it's not right to have somebody else writing the lyrics to my music.

MM: SINCE THE DEBUT AND PARADISE HOW DO YOU THINK THE BAND HAS ACTUALLY CHANGED?

Dan: Well we've changed members, I think this record is, well arguably there's more melody in this record I think it's more brutal than the first one. The first one is certainly more of a conventional, traditional hardcore record.

MM: DO THINK THERE'S MORE DIRECTION IN THIS ONE?

Dan: Yeah, there is more direction but at the same time it's a wider range of influences to enter into the picture. It's definitely the most focussed, there's a clearer agenda. The agenda of the first one is probably "COME ON LETS MAKE MUSIC" and it was also a continuation of that shorter faster louder kind of agenda. This record I think comes from a much more, directly from the political situation in the US and also to my domestic situation – I was divorced in the year prior to this record coming out so I'd say war at home and war abroad are the overarching themes that keep the record focused, while the human capacity self deception the sate of the world and the state of the household. So it does have that kind of focus. I definitely worked hard to avoid the exclusion of influences that weren't punk.

MM: WHY PUNK ROCK STILL?

Dan: I barely listen to any punk rock any more but it's what I want to play.

MM: OBVIOUSLY PUNK ROCK'S IMPORTANT IN YOUR LIFE IF IT'S WHAT YOU WANT TO PLAY, BUT YOU'VE MADE A SEPARATION BETWEEN THE KIND OF MUSIC YOU PLAY AND THE KIND OF MUSIC YOU LISTEN TO – WHY IS THAT?

Dan: I'm not sure that's fair. I listen to a lot of older punk. I don't think that there's very much good new punk. I also think to write good punk rock I think that you have to listen to a lot more than punk rock. I listen to everything – well maybe not everything not Country and Western and not fucking hippy shit.

THE SHOWS WERE $5 WHEN I WAS 16 AND NOW I'M 37. THE PRICE OF EVERYTHINGHASFUCKINGDOUBLED. DRUMSTICKS,GUITARSTRINGS,GAS,RENT ANDFOODSOTHEIDEATHATPEOPLE, ESPECIALLYNTHECRUSTYSCENEBITCH ABOUTSHOWSBEINGMORETHAN$5IS FUCKING RETARDED.

MM: DO YOU THINK THAT THERE'S A SEPARATION BETWEEN THE PUNK AND HARDCORE SCENES?

Dan: I think there has been for a long time, I don't think there should be.

MM: WHY DO YOU THINK THEY'VE SEPARATED?

Dan: I think it's so big now that it can't help but mirror mainstream culture, that people sort of just like to divide in the service of developing their own identity, people like to define themselves by what they're not. So you've got this like "I'm straight edge I don't listen to drunk punk or street punk 'cos they drink" or "I'm emo I don't listen to hardcore" the divisions are absurd. I don't know why Los Crudos and Youth of Today and Damage Deposit wouldn't be playing the same show, aesthetically. It's so funny, I really believe as a musician and as a psychologist that people hear what they hear based on what they expect rather than what's actually there...

MM: THAT THERE'S AN ALBUM OF WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR RATHER THAN...

Dan: Exactly. Someone who identifies themselves as an anarcho punk listens to something that's designed as an anarcho punk record it could sound like a straight edge record but he hears an anarcho punk record and the same on the other side – if you dressed up Damage Deposit with athletic fonts and pictures of people jumping and played it to straight edge kids they'd accept it as straight edge. I firmly believe that people hear what they're expecting to hear. I don't think there's a lot of credible listening that goes on. The thing I notice when touring is the smaller scenes, they're not big enough to sustain the breakdown into these little sub-clicks. We played Iceland on the way over here and that's a city where every fucking freak in the city turns up – garage kids and hippies, skin-heads, Mohawks, a ton of people in wheelchairs even though the space was on the fourth floor. Every misfit in the city in a celebration of alienation which is what I think a lot of punk and hardcore is about. That's how I think about the division, I mean the division's been around since, I think, DOA started using the term hardcore.

MM: GIVEN YOUR WEALTH OF TOURING EXPERIENCE, HAS YOUR APPROACH TO TOURING CHANGED AT ALL?

Dan: I'm really grateful in 2005 that I'm not burdened with the aspiration of doing my band full time, because I think that even the independent music industry, mimics the major label music industry just put people in the position where they have to make pretty terrible choices in order to consider doing their band for a living with a few exceptions. A band like Tragedy can do things entirely on their own terms and on their own label. I also think it's unfair to hold every band to that standard. I'm glad that we can just do it and not have to worry about paying the rent. My philosophy is to work hard and enjoy the tour and not worry about the financial stuff. But I also think that a lot of bands make really bad decisions about their "careers" because they want to make it, I think a lot of bands are more concerned with finding a manager and a booking agent than they are with making an album of good songs. A lot of what I would call the emo equivalent of hair metal bands are entirely career driven from the beginning. I also think there are a lot of real punk bands that are held to an unfair standard because people will say Fugazi do this and Tragedy do that but those bands both have the benefit of being ex-members who were in bands that were huge in a sub section of the scene that remembers that kind of shit. The crusty scene has a long-term memory. Kids that get into clean cut hardcore now aren't running out and buying Minor Threat or Gorilla Biscuit records. But every kid that gets into the crusty scene is sewing an Amebix patch on their back. Tragedy can go through and play on their own terms to 300 people in every city put out their own record and put it out entirely through table distros and that works for them but that can only work for a few bands, and Fugazi can play $6 shows because they draw a thousand people. The shows were $5 when I was 16 and now I'm 37. The price of everything has fucking doubled. Drumsticks, guitar strings, gas, rent and food so the idea that people, especially in the crusty scene bitch about shows being more than $5 is fucking retarded.

MM: THIS IS THE PROBLEM, PEOPLE THINK "THIS IS OUR PICTURE OF PUNK ROCK AND THIS IS HOW IT SHOULD BE". THEY CAN ACCEPT THE COST OF LIVING HAS GONE UP WHERE THEY LIVE BUT WHEN THE COST OF SHOWS GO UP...

Dan: That's supposed to be a utopia that floats in this little unreal island in the middle of everything that's not subject to the realities of everyday life. And in some ways I understand that, you know, I want to live a punk rock life that isn't subject to a lot of the aspects of the outside world but the economy is not one that I have a choice about. I can reject the institutionalised sexism, I can't reject the cost of gasoline. I can't believe that gasoline is $2 a litre but that's the way it is. In the states people go on and on about $5 shows and stuff it's like "shut the fuck up" it's a pointless stupid battle

MM: I THINK WHEN YOU REACH A CERTAIN AGE YOU UNDERSTAND A LOT MORE ABOUT THE WORLD, WHEREAS WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG, YOU FOCUS ON THE INNOCENT THINGS...

Dan: Like if you get to see two touring bands and a local band for 8 bucks you're fucking lucky because that's still way cheaper than anything in the mainstream world.

MM: WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL BRING TO THE BAND?

Dan: I think to this band I bring the focus. It's sort of my, not that anybody's expendable, but I'm writing all the music and lyrics so I bring fanatic and topical focus of the songs and albums and I bring the music. I bring a degree of dissatisfaction with the state of the world, which I think you need to be in a punk band. I think that of the three people in the band in their 30s I think I'm definitely the most political, I definitely bring that to the table. My strengths and weaknesses – my strength is I guess my perseverance and drive to get things done and my weakness is my fear of confrontation even when it's important, like a conversation in the band which is going to be uncomfortable I will avoid until things get out of hand. Odd for someone who gets up and screams in front of people every night, huh?

MM: MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE YOU DEAL WITH PEOPLE WITH SO MANY OTHER COMPLEX PROBLEMS THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO HEAR

ABOUT THOSE KIND OF PROBLEMS IN YOUR OTHER LIFE...

Dan: I'm sure that's some aspect of it but some of it is just fear if I'm going to be honest about it.

MM: WHERE DID THE NAME OF THE BAND COME FROM? – WAS IT THE ROLLING STONES SONG?

Dan: Yes. Let's be honest – the most important things about the name of a band is that the members agree on it and that is sounds bad-ass.

MM: YEAH, I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU ABOUT THAT NEXT – THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A BAND'S NAME.

Dan: Anybody that loves rock music – and we're real Anglophiles in this band – at one point learn to appreciate the Rolling Stones. Paint It Black sounds tough as fucking hell! And my other picks for band name didn't go over too well.

MM: PLUS IT WAS USED IN THE SOUNDTRACK FOR THAT VIETNAM SERIES TOUR OF DUTY

Dan: The Avengers covered it too.

MM: WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST SHOW YOU'VE EVER PLAYED?

Dan: The craziest show I've ever played. There could be a lot of answers to that question. We played, the first time Lifetime came to Europe, we played a squat in Paris that was more of a compound than anything, totally Joy Division if anything. This place was, the front of it was an apartment building where the people were squatting, behind it was what I can only describe as an aircraft hanger although as it was in the middle of Paris I'm guessing it was a large depot where they parked a fleet of school buses at one time – anyway it was the size of an aircraft hanger that had been turned into a day-care facility for children so we pulled into this compound and 30 naked 3 year olds covered in paint ran by us and we walk into this aircraft hanger which is literally like four stories high and there's all sorts of things for kids fashioned out of debris – there was an entire city of like – do you know what a tepee is? – there's a little village of these little tepees made out of paper and plywood. Hippies, yes, but it was punk as fuck too! There was like two steel rowboats suspended with steel cables from the ceiling four stories above lined with mattresses which were swings for the kids to swing back and forth. There was a carousel made out of shopping carts – all this shit like a fucking amusement park made out of garbage and industrial throw away shit – it was a fucking wonderland. I mean I played in a lot of this shit it was amazing! The shows were in a bomb shelter underneath, that was pretty fun. It was like a circus community lived there.

MM: DO YOU THINK MUSIC IS AN EFFECTIVE MEDIUM FOR CHANGE BE IT PERSONAL, SOCIAL OR POLITICAL?

Dan: I think that music is an effective medium for talking about change, but not a medium for change... I mean it's a medium for personal change, at least for me it has and I'm guessing for you guys too. Anyway it's a medium for dialogue about change. I think it's a little bit of a fantasy to say it's a medium for change in and of itself.

MM: NOT JUST LIMITING TO PUNK ROCK BUT MUSIC AS A WHOLE, FOR INSTANCE THE ROCK AND ROLL REVOLUTION...

Dan: I guess as certain cultural phenomenon intersect with certain flashpoints in history I think music can be a medium for change, the '60s in the US – definitely, probably in the '80s in the UK when there's an intersection between social movements, historical forces and musical movements in which case music can be a medium for change, but in general I think it's more a medium for talking about change.

MM: FROM A PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW HOW DO YOU VIEW HUMAN EXISTENCE?

Dan: The day to day mundane workaday human existence? What do I think of that from a psychological point of view? I think it can be pretty numbing but I also think it really depends on the person's situation I mean, one of the things I bring – my punk life isn't separate from my work life – I require of my 9-5 existence a fair amount of meaning and purpose not just paying the bills but I think a lot of people just get caught in doing what it takes to pay the bills and not really worrying about feeling fulfilled and happy. I think people settle for satisfied. I'm not trying to set myself above those people by saying that – I understand how people get locked into that because you work your ass off and you just want to come home and be with your family and numb your head a little bit. I certainly understand how people get into that pattern. I think the cycle of earn, spend, consume is kinda what keeps the capitalist oligarchy alive – and this is what's more of a psychological idea than a social one or a sociological one – maybe it's all three- I think that that 9-5 numbing cycle serves the purpose of the state doesn't it. You're on a treadmill so you don't even have time to think about the state – if you're a hamster on a treadmill you're not thinking about the cage you're in, you're just thinking about running.

ITHINKTHATMUSICISANEFFECTIVEMEDIUMFORTALKINGABOUT CHANGE,BUTNOTAMEDIUMFOR CHANGE…

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MM: HOW DO YOU BELIEVE AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD BE JUDGED – BY WORDS OR DEEDS?

Dan: By my standards!! No, there are a lot of one liners you could use to answer – that you should judge people by their actions not their words, but being a psychologist, in my trade, words are my tools, so I think language is action, I don't believe when people say "lighten up it's just words" – I don't believe that. Like when people throw their so –called harmless bigoted epithets around and say "oh relax it's just a word" I don't buy that for a second. I think language is behaviour and human beings construct meaning through language. If we don't have a word for something we can't even grasp the concept of if. We language things into existence so I think we're judged by all these things.

MM: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH PAINT IT BLACK?

Dan: I want to continue to honour the traditions of punk rock while also transcending them. I want to honour the tradition of fast, aggressive music of punk rock as protest music but that's also charged with emotion. It doesn't have to be political to the exclusion of personal material. I want to honour the traditions of it being aggressive and angry but I also want to rise above the traditions and not be constrained by them. This is the first album where I felt that the short fast loud formula was more of a hindrance, more of a constraint so I tried to get a little bit beyond that, and I'll continue to do that whilst still being like an angry hardcore band. My other goals, on stage are just to bring it, 120% every night whether you're playing to five people or five hundred people.

MM: WHAT'S NEXT FOR PAINT IT BLACK?

Dan: We're gonna be home in two days, I'm in the middle of writing the next record. We might have some more line-up changes, we may want to add a second guitar player and we'll be back here in the spring I hope.

MM: IF YOU'VE ANYTHING TO ADD – SPEAK NOW OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE.

Dan: Thanks for an interesting set of questions. I hope that you didn't get so fucking cerebral that your readership just looks at it and dozes off!

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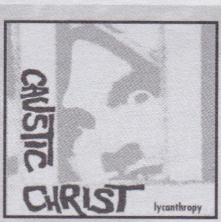

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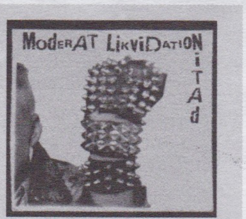

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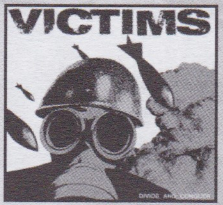

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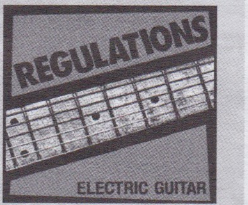

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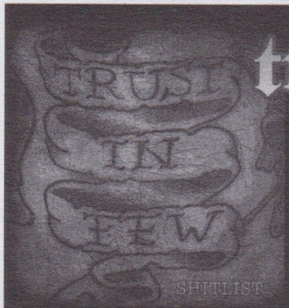

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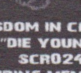

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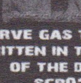

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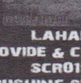

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EDDIE t

Well, as usual, column deadline time approacheth and I haven't got a scooby about what to write. I get at least forty ideas a minute for the entire time I'm not writing a column. Then when I finally settle down to it I can only remember the shit ones. Ho hum. So, given that it was as good an idea as anything else I've come up with in the last ten minutes, I'd like to introduce you to my lovely column for this issue of MM, the Joy of Swearing. Or at least, my top ten swearys and why they're so fucking ace. You cunt.

1) Spasmojesticle – A cross between Spasmo and Testicle, it rolls off the tongue with the best of them. More a comedy swear than a true conveyor of bile, but get's the job done every time. I'm thinking of naming one of my children after it, after all you need a name like that for your kids or they miss out on all that character-forming bullying.

2) Buntyman – My new favourite word for nonce. Perfect for shouting at tube attendants, bosses, priests and other prize titties, as most of them won't know what it means and you can get away without having your head staved in.

3) Toolio – Another contraction, this time of tool and coolio. This is to be applied to white hip-hop freaks who think they're from Compton. Especially those who talk like they're from Compton though they're really from Coventry.

4) Titty – Old gold, in the shape of this flippant, fruity little number. Perfect for shouting at vicars who've just let their wife's poodles shit on your lawn.

5) Knackersacker – Good, solid, dependable swear, with a lovely action and a rhythm all of it's own. Great for getting your tongue round (oo-er missus)

6) Crap Raper – This one's perfect for use in a pub fight, especially with a less-hard person, as it's pretty much as violently offensive as they come.

7) Fuckshitwankercuntbollocks – To be kept in reserve and deployed when you have just experienced violent, sudden pain such as that resulting from impaling your testicles on a rake or unexpectedly passing a kidney stone.

8) Spunkpig – I always enjoy teaching this one to five-year-olds and telling them that if they shout it out at school, their teacher has to take to whole class to the Cadburys factory and they will get all the chocolate they will carry. I tell them it's another word for bunnyrabbit, and I'm not about to enlighten them.

9) Faeces-on-toast – A good general all purpose swear which can be trotted out for anything from receiving a sudden and violent buggering on the segregated wing of Perth prison to winning the lottery.

10) Fucktard – Great for dissing online foes and eejits on message boards. People who live with their mothers at 45 and play Magic semi-professionally tend to take it particularly personally.

Anyway, that's all from me for now. Remember, keep your country foulmouthed, and don't forget to check out my band's rather fine MP3's (if I do say so myself) for free at www.flowersoffleshandblood.co.uk . All the best, until next time, Eddie T.

Tim

mass movement

There were four of us. Mean motherfuckers to a man, ripped on the inside and poisoned on the out, waiting for something to happen. Something, anything. If you'd looked up the definition of under achiever the four of us would have stared back at you, dicks in our hands, dancing to the beat of a different drummer. We were the remnants of a gene pool contaminated by crass commercialism and the me generation. The last drop that trickled down the leg of multinational trade off's. Each of us was a loser, proud of the fact that society had left us to play the game with an incomplete rule book. There wasn't anybody to tuck us in at night and read us a bedtime story, the thread of chemical escapism was our nurse maid, chasing away monsters and exorcising evil spirits, putting her arms around us, drawing us closer to her bosom as the outside world surrounded us. Left to our own devices the kitchen sink had become a melting pot for physical science. Reconstituting hallucinogenic's and tobacco as a psychedelic exit from reality that lit up like a Christmas tree every time it's plastic coffin was touched. For weeks we'd caressed the containing vessel dreaming of the alternative realities that waited beyond the veil. The ceremony was about to begin. War paint was applied and head dresses fixed in place, each of us stared deeply into the flames, drawing our own conclusions as we pondered the implications of our impending journey. Standing as one with the night, held by the velvet curtain of darkness, illuminated only by the sparks that drifted from the fire riding currents of disparity.

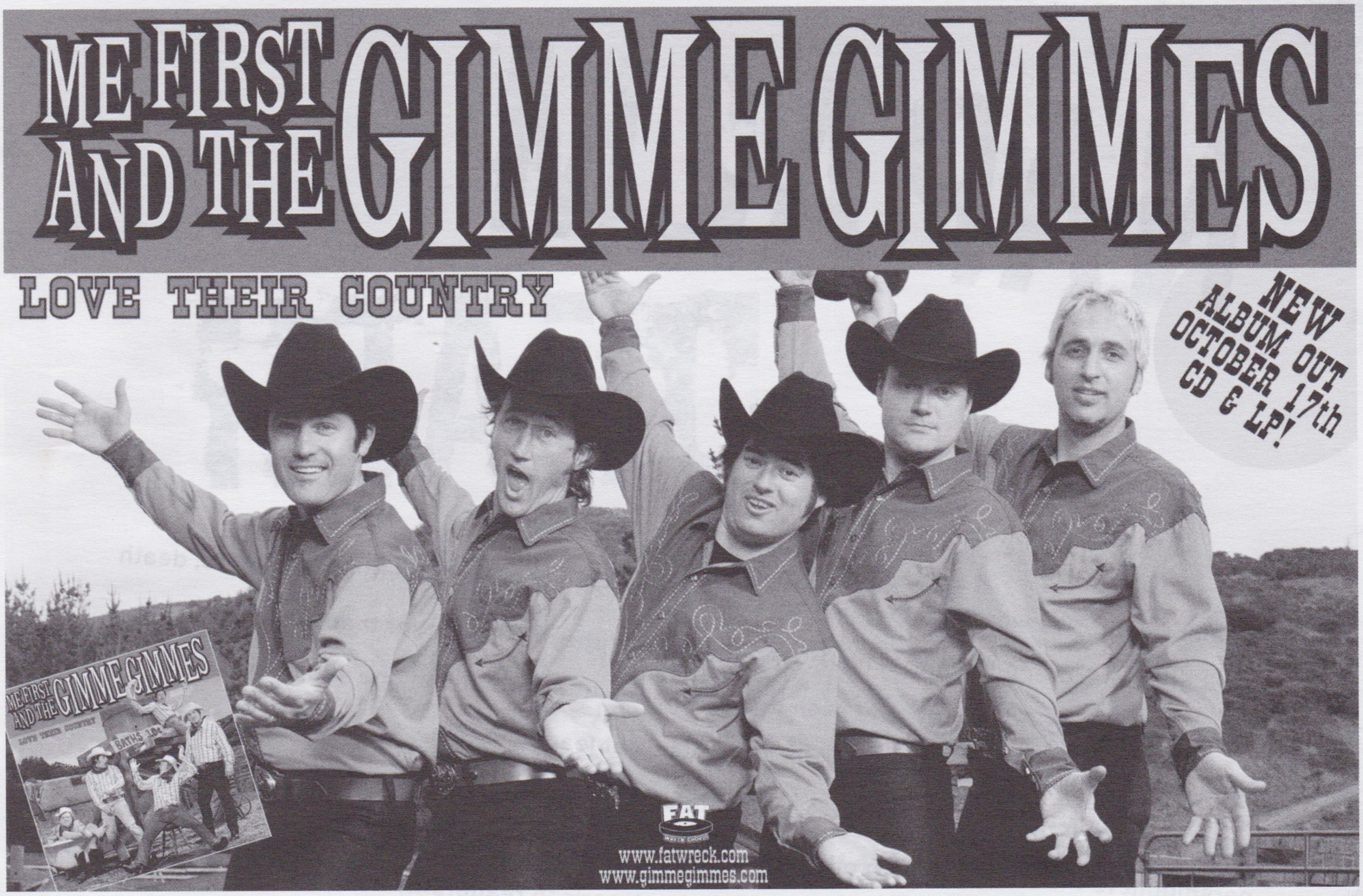
The pipe, delicately carved by the warped hands of a twisted imagination, was passed around. Cold to the touch, it's warmth soon became apparent to even the most distant animals, a thing of beauty in a world of misery. It's existence proved that man walked the path of destiny alone, diseased and condemned to obscurity. I held it, gently running my fingers up and down it's stem, and thought about Duke sitting alone in Woodstock watching home movies, reliving his memories, time and time again. Through the smoke I watched my demons play hide and seek, holding hands as they carved their initials on the bark of long dead tree's. I lifted the tube to my mouth and lit the bowl, inhaling slowly, I felt the burning fumes scar my lungs as the toxins entered my bloodstream and took my brain apart, piece by piece. My senses packed their bags and left for the coast, leaving friends, family and familiarity behind as they searched for a place in the country far from the hustle of city life. I sat in the bleachers with a hot dog and a beer, Plato to my left, Aristotle to my right and watched the world as it's history flashed by in three innings.

The dinosaurs followed all of Mother Natures guidelines and looked like they were doing pretty well. Swing batter, swing. Strike one, they got themselves a healthy dose of religion and started fighting, each side claiming that God had made them in his image and as such was superior to the others. Strike two came with the free love movement, as Tyrannosaur humped Brontosaurus and vice versa. The air became filled with the stench of cheap swamp after shave as safe sex was cast aside due to increasing rubber and pharmaceutical costs, and badly controlled pesticides made even the most virile Stegosaur sterile. Strike three. With the discovery of nicotine and virtual reality the terrible lizards disappeared almost without trace. Only the mammals remained, contented and happy in their work as salesmen and insurance brokers they had never understood the need to let their hair down.

Rain stopped play as the apes evolved, arguing over the smallest issues. What started as a dispute over a bedroom extension soon developed into full blown tribal warfare, the boundaries being drawn over every monkeys right to fit mirrored ceilings in his bathroom. If you didn't like your neighbour you moved in order to let your inner child grow, finding the room to nurture those nagging design concepts like the wheel and the arrow head. The economy collapsed as new age fanaticism shook the earth to it's molten crust.

Final inning and everything rested on team communication. Scientific theory put forward it's case as did theology, philosophy, sociology and a million other such plays. With no decided game plan, the entire team was soon struck out, tripping over their own laces on the way to the home plate. The field was abandoned as ten thousand fans grudgingly made their way home, muttering and cursing the fact that stupidity had cost the visiting team an almost certain victory. Lights dimmed as the staff set about preparing the ball park for the next evening, crossing their fingers and praying that the home sides winning streak would hold. A mountain of food wrappers and empty paper cups were the only testament to the evenings game.

I woke to find my hair matted by pieces of the previous evenings meal, my war paint smudged and tattered jeans stained by urine. Spitting in a vain attempt to rid myself of the smell and taste of rancid vomit, I sat in the damp grass desperately trying to warm my hands over the smouldering remains of the fire. If any of us are masters of our own fate, then belly up to the bar and have another drink, because closing time is getting ever closer. While you're there, have one for me. After all it's happy hour and the juke box is rocking. The umpires decision is final.



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THREATS 2002

NAPALM DEATH

Napalm Death. Two words that are synonymous with the advent and growth of grind core, death metal and hardcore. A band that have been doing what they do for longer than I (or they in all likelihood) care to remember, and even though they've been around, in one shape or form, for more than twenty years, their name still guarantee's at least one thing. Quality. Whether playing every show as if their lives depended on it or releasing consistently great records, quality is paramount to the Napalm Death ethic. I caught up with Barney late one night via the medium of the old dog and bone (that's the telephone to our American readers...)

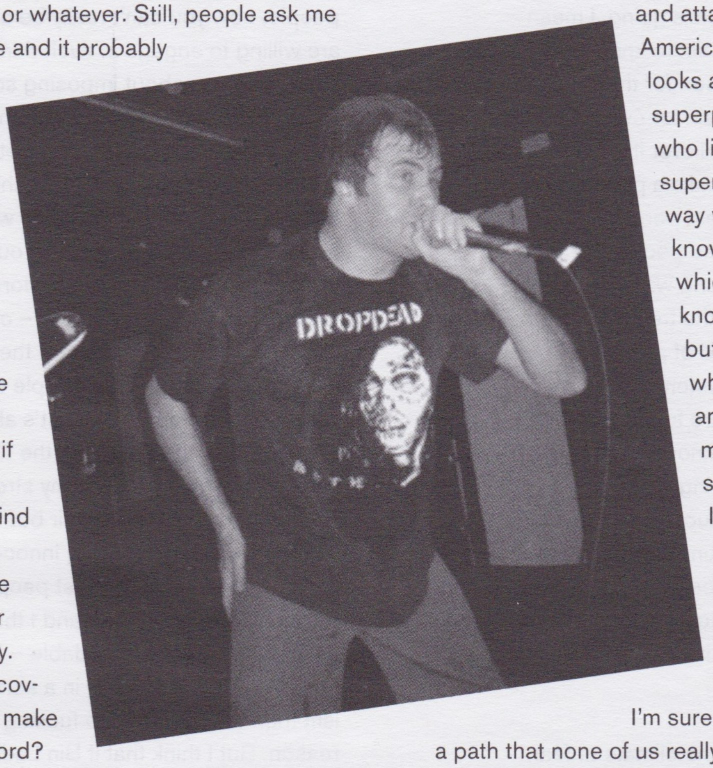
Interview by Tim

MM: So, everybody knows who you are, so what have you been up to between 'Order of the Leach' and the new record?

Barney: It's a bit of a strange time really because we just found ourselves with the option of going complete DIY, if you know what I mean which we'd always had that kind of thinking in terms of the control aspect of the band but we'd always leaned on record labels and they've leaned on us sort of thing. So we were actually in the position where we could actually chose whether we went complete DIY. The problem was, you know, we looked at it quite seriously and we looked at what it would have taken to handle a Napalm release and to be honest, none of us could have handled it, it just would have been too insane. Plus the fact that we didn't have the money to do it, anywhere near the money to handle a Napalm release. So at that point, because we'd had such fucking problems with record labels in the past, I mean we really sort of were thinking of doing it DIY but at the end of the day Century Media came along and they'd been sort of sniffing for a while so we sat down with them and really sort of made pains to let them know that under no means were we prepared to be fucked any more. I mean we probably if things didn't work out we probably would have done something drastic and split the band rather than let another record label shaft us. It started to look quite good so, to cut a long story short we eventually signed with Century media. We already had the covers EP recorded which we'd done, very kindly the guy that owned the studio in Brum, we didn't have any money to pay him, so he said 'record it here then when you get the deal sorted then we can sort it out, you know. So 'Leaders' was already done when we signed with Century so that pretty much came out straight away and then of course that sort of dovetailed nicely into the new album with a few shows in between, here there and everywhere and bob's your auntie!

MM: Going back to 'Leaders part 2' I was kind of curious as to how you chose which tunes to cover, there's such a wide variety on there, you know?

Barney: The unwritten rule with that was that it didn't really matter which songs we covered but we wanted them to be from what we considered to be the halcyon period, if you like, which was the '80s. They very much shaped the way Napalm Death sound, everything from Minor Threat to Hell Hammer and the early days of Death, you know and all the really sort of old European and US hardcore from the '80s and stuff so that was the only thing really. I guess they actually came from the tape box, if you like, or the vinyl collection. Of course, there are many, many bands from the '80s that deserve that kind of treatment, you know, because people just don't know about them and they deserve to be known about because, in my opinion, that period, in terms of quality far outweighs what comes along these days in similar scenes or whatever. Still, people ask me what my influences are and it probably sounds a bit jaded but all my influences pretty much end in '88 but that's because, of course it all comes down to opinion again, but that period for me in terms of song-writing, intensity and the whole substance in general I guess extreme music, if you want to call it that, was a lot better. You kind of stick with what you know and what you like and kind of shape your band around that really.



MM: Were there any covers that actually didn't make the final cut of the record?

Barney: Well we'd actually got plans for about 30 songs but we didn't want to take the piss too much at the studio seeing as he was really doing us a big favour. So we had about 30 songs but we had to stop the clock at 19, you know but there were things like the Gores' cover which we actually did later on and tacked it onto the Japanese release of the new album. I've still got all the ideas and there's stuff like – Minor Threat is probably one of the more well known ones and there's stuff like Deep Wound, from Boston so there's still a wealth of stuff that can be done but nothing recorded because we had to stop the clock.

MM: 'The Code is Red, Long live the Code' – what does the album title refer to?

Barney: What it basically is – there are obvious parallels there to probably American authoritarianism but it's not necessarily pointing at that. It's pointing across a lot of different values of people around the world. Code red, as everyone knows, literally means high state of alert and I wanted to use that whole image really of the whole National Security system that America came up with and everyone else has adopted. When you've got the system of lights, basically moving through green and blue and ultimately up to red in a sequence of colours of severity, of threat or whatever. And what I basically wanted to say is that the code is basically red all the time, you know, because I think various governments and authorities around the world, the fear factor is more effective than ever. They actually prefer it if there is a climate of fear, a climate of violence blah, blah, blah because it allows them to govern easier, in a more authoritarian way; against not necessarily strictly and attack pointed entirely at America but of course everybody looks at America because it is the superpower if you like, for people who like to use that term. It is a superpower and they seem to get way with more than most, you know. The patriarchy in America which I'm sure that people know a lot about on the surface, but if you really read into it, which I have, I've read quite an extensive document on it, I mean it's fucking ridiculous some of the things in there. I mean we are literally one step away from being arrested for simply expressing views, which are contrary to those of people who are in a high position of power. I'm sure everyone would agree is a path that none of us really want to be going down. Although it could be argued that that was already in place although it's been formalised now, and when you get this creeping climate of fear where you can convince people to practically seal up your letter box in fear of someone putting a letter bomb through your letter box and not to trust the person down the street if they're slightly different from you just because he is. I mean that's fucking crazy and that's the point I wanted to make, that we are going down that path slowly but surely and it's up to us, as individuals or collectively, it's up to us to basically have a mindset that says 'you know what? I walk this earth in the same way that that guy does in government, I deserve not to be harassed or oppressed in this way, so you know what man? …fuck off, leave me alone'

MM: Well, when you look at a government that's basically business orientated anyway, they're going to move us closer to a one world government anyway…

Barney: It's fucking crazy some of the stuff. I mean, today, I'm in Birmingham today, we had a tornado in Birmingham today and what happened was it went through town which is just two or three miles away from here, it went through Spark Hill, which is where the rest of the band is actually, it demolished a building and there was about 40 people trapped underneath the building and it killed 4 people down the road so there's actually quite a few people dead from the tornado this afternoon. When I heard it I thought someone was taking the piss, you know, but it was true, and I guess the point I'm trying to make in a round about way, look at the way our whole ecosystem's going. I mean you don't have to be a rocket scientist to know that it's changing and there's good reason for that. I mean the effects of pollution are quite plain for everybody to see and me personally I'm a firm believer in recycling and things like that, you've got to make a personal effort. Obviously some of the biggest perpetrators of damage are the multinationals and people like that and they need to change their fucking ways first of all, and if people like Bush won't sign the treaties to stop pollution there should be some kind of punishment, of course there should. But the ecosystem's changing and it's all because these people are fucking with it, why don't they leave it alone? You know what I mean? Bush has finally passed a bill allowing them to drill for oil in one of the last remaining untouched places of the arctic circle and that's just fucking scandalous, you know because why should he be allowed to do it if it affects mine yours and a guy a thousand miles away. Why should he be allowed to do it if it's affecting all our futures.

MM: Profit before population…

Barney: Exactly, you know again, the climate of fear, the climate of not being arsed means that people won't actually take heed until it's too fucking late. It's completely irreversible. We're in a spiralling state of heading towards a premature fucking ice age or something. I'm no scientist but I just know that it's going to be fucking bad. That's the general crux really. The thing I'm trying to get over also is that the governmental power is arguably getting more and more so. The gap between the sheep and the shepherds is getting wider and wider you know. It might sound naïve to some people but I think that there should be a point when we have sort of a people's council where governments are kept in check, because they seem to be getting more and more with murder.

MM: What amazes me is that we live in a democracy, and America's a democracy and a democracy is the will of the people and when you don't follow the will of the people you are no longer living in a democracy, you're living in a totalitarian state.

Barney: Well exactly, you kind of touched on it there. These terms are very loose, humanitarianism, a democracy, things like that but the way governments use them it's their own loose interpretation of a democracy, or humanitarianism is another one because Bush, Blair, a lot of other governments they always talk about a humanitarian stance yet they're quite happy to reign bombs down on innocent people and kill 30-40,000 people, now you can't really be a humanitarian if you are willing to engage in such things and I think that, again, thinking about imposing some kind of common sense; I actually think that war and weapons and stuff should actually be made completely illegal. I think tanks, bombs, guns, whatever should be melted down because I can't see what good war can do in this day and age. I think it's outmoded, outdated, and I think that these people who actually endorse war, if they really fucking knew what it entailed – obviously there's the destruction and the murder – then they would think again but some of these people don't have the fucking brains they were born with. It's always the innocent that suffer for the people at the top and that includes anyone, obviously I've got my strong political leanings about, you know Bush, Blair but that also goes for Bin Laden because he's killing innocent people. I totally think that in the middle east people are being persecuted and demonised there and I think it's fucking bullshit and it's highly understandable – basically people are fucking with them acting in a sort of way of imperialism then they're going to fucking fight back it stands to reason. But I think that if Bin Laden is behind the war or whatever and it's still not been firmly established – he's just a figurehead really – then to kill the innocent, well that's always fucking wrong. As time goes by, me personally, I get more and more anti violence. I will defend myself if someone attacks me but if you take that away I believe in no violence at all. I mean violence is no means to anywhere really.

MM: The thing with Islam though is that it's a non-violent religion. You take something that's based on predominantly non-violence and you twist it into this mantra of hatred. All they are doing is brainwashing kids and getting them to die for their cause which makes them no different to anybody else.

Barney: Religion is fucked up. I think that, of course I wouldn't want to ban religion because we all have freedom of thought and stuff but I'm very much into secular ways and such but I find it really fucking rich, and I'm not playing tit for tat here but I find it really fucking rich that people like Bush – I know his name keeps coming up but it is a good example – people like Bush are always banging on about how Islam has been perverted to create this atmosphere of evil and violence but America is pretty much 50 - 75% ruled by Christian bigots ..

MM: Well it's a country founded on religion with the founding fathers…

Barney: and they are complete religious bigots. OK they might not be in the streets setting off bombs but these people and their followers are bombing abortion clinics, stopping people from leading reasonable lives, you know, they oppress women. They talk about oppression of women in the middle east but these people won't allow women to use their own bodies as they wish and all that kind of thing, double standards really is what I mean.

MM: With the censorship of any kind of art which doesn't agree with Bush censors… Like the Dixie Chicks…

Barney: Yeah, I'm sure you probably know about the whole creationism thing where they're stickering books now where the thing that you or I might believe - about how we evolved gradually through a long period we sort of moved onwards and upwards – they're putting stickers on text books to say 'This is not necessarily the truth' it's just getting fucking absurd. That really fucking does my head in.

MM: 150 years of scientific development just killed overnight

Barney: And you know what mate, you mentioned the founding fathers but the original constitution the way it's written, I mean I don't know the exact wording but basically 'no man shall use a religion to govern the populous' that was written in the original constitution and somehow they twisted it around and then they had written in the 'One nation under God' thing, you know what I mean? A lot of people in America are like fuck?…

MM: It's actually written in the American constitution that if an American doesn't like the way the country's governed to bare arms against his government without facing charges of treason, but nobody's gonna talk about that because that wouldn't fit in with the big agenda.

Barney: Exactly. I just find it really strange again Bush will quite happily point the finger at other people for being violent and stuff but he and other – Republican and Democrats – will not do anything about the gun situation in America. I mean, if you want less violence – I mean I know there's a lot of guns out there on the streets – but if you want less violence stop the guns at source, fucking get rid. No-one needs a fucking shooter. No-one needs to go out there and buy a new shooter from a shop and if you're telling me you need to do that then you're fucking life, there's something missing.

MM: The way they'd counter that is that they say 'guns don't kill people, people do' but if you didn't put a gun in this person's hand they wouldn't be capable of killing that person in the first place.

Barney: That's totally my argument as well. Okay, I'm a pissed off person. You give me two options: I can either stick my two fingers up in the shape of a gun and like pull it, and what's going to happen – nothing – or you can put an actual gun in my hand and I can do the same action and there's one dead person in front of me and that's the difference.

MM: Do you think the way the world's developed has actually changed the way you see things lyrically?

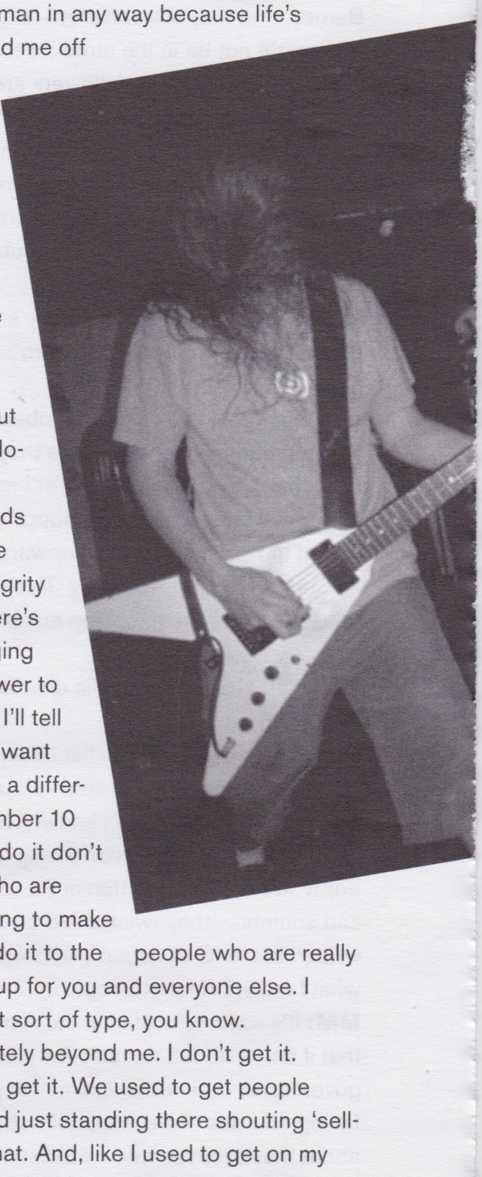
Barney: Not necessarily. I think that even though there have been some quite significant world events in the last five or six years I think that I've always had the same ideas. I lived, and you probably did, I lived through Thatcher in a working class town and a working class family. I literally had the fucking milk snatched right out of my mouth. So we had that whole sort of deal really we had the whole thing with the Falklands war back then. Margaret Thatcher was very much in favour of rooting out and weeding out legitimate socialist governments around the world. She was all for Reagan, and before Reagan the policy of sort of exposing and basically upsetting the balance in countries where there was legitimate left wing government. That's always shaped my opinion. Yeah it's the events really – you're probably right actually – the events have probably attuned me even more to it but the general sentiment's always been there really. One of the things, for me, being in a band like Napalm I mean the music's absolutely mental, just sounds really violent of course, but my point is that you don't have to be in an extreme band and be a meathead. You can actually be a tolerant peaceful sort of person and still play extreme music and you'' be surprised the number of people who think that you're in an extreme band and you've gotta be really evil all the time, it doesn't work that way.

MM: You can use your platform for intelligent discourse or you can just say 'Hail Satan' every five minutes.

Barney: I think fair do's to people that do that stuff, you know I'm not criticising them, all I'm saying is, you talk about this stuff with some people and they go 'oh um are you off some other planet or something' no, I'm actually kind of a human being actually, hopefully in the truest sense of the word. It just puzzles some people I think. But oh fuck it. Fuck it!

MM: So is there anything you miss about the old days of Napalm?

Barney: I miss The Mermaid actually, in Birmingham. That again, if you go back, again, to your formative years for music etcetera - and obviously music's a huge influence on your life as well – if you think back to what your formative years were, I could go back and think 'what were the most formative things for me?': probably seeing Motorhead for the first time, and after that, that was entirely formative for me and then, what's the next thing that's formative for me, well probably, truthful, the Mermaid in Brum. I saw Napalm, Heresy and then anything from Gun, the old reggae band, you know, all that kind of stuff we used to get in the Mermaid in Brum. All the great American bands, Attitude Adjustment, SNFU, that was very formative and I miss it. I miss the sense of community – the sense of community at the old Mermaid was fantastic, but then of course, as with a lot of things, it got to the point where people started stabbing each other out the back. Napalm started getting a bit of attention above and beyond that circle, Concrete Fuck started getting a lot of attention above and beyond that circle, Sacrilege started getting a lot of attention above and beyond that circle and you know yourself, mate in punk/hardcore scenes, there's a real negative side to it. You know, this band's getting a bit of attention, so that band's completely trying to distance themselves from the whole thing – well no it doesn't mean that at all. It actually means that instead of just preaching to the converted you're actually getting out there to a few more people. You know, I saw the end of the Mermaid days; when I joined Napalm there were a lot of people that I once considered my friends that turned on me for no reason whatsoever. I try not to be a bitter man in any way because life's too short but it pissed me off that and it hurt me quite a lot.



MM: Well it happens all the time mate, if a band starts taking off the scene turns on it because it's like they've betrayed everything they stood for: No! they're just getting out there and hopefully doing some good.

Barney: A lot of bands have got a lot of drive and passion and integrity in their hearts yet there's people fucking slagging them off and my answer to those people is 'well I'll tell you what mate if you want punk to go and make a difference, go outside number 10 Downing Street and do it don't do it to the people who are actually out there trying to make a difference go and do it to the people who are really trying to fuck things up for you and everyone else. I don't understand that sort of type, you know.

MM: No, it's completely beyond me. I don't get it.

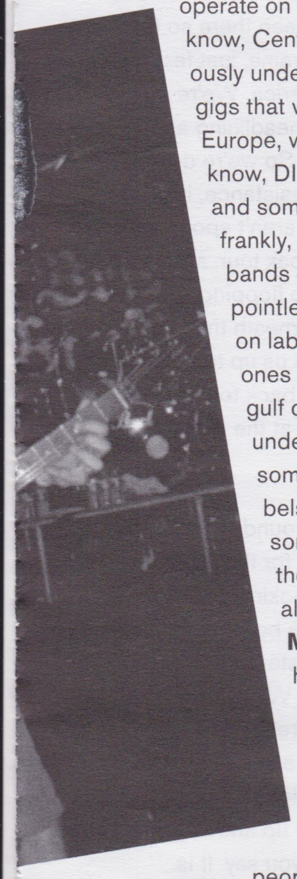
Barney: We used to get it. We used to get people turning up at gigs and just standing there shouting 'sell-out' and things like that. And, like I used to get on my high horse about it the fucking twats you know what I mean? But now I just ignore it because even dignify an answer really, I just say 'oh fuck it' you know.

MM: The kids who are shouting loudest mate are the 16 year olds who have never had to move out of house or home. They're still living with mummy and daddy, everything's fucking paid for, new car on the drive, all that kind of shit

Barney: The irony of it is, I have found this in the past, it's come from a couple of people with rich mummies and daddies they can't have spent, or maybe used to spend weekends in a squat or whatever then they go home every second weekend or whatever to their comfort zone.

MM: Given the current trend towards the alternative, do you think that there is actually an underground left?

Barney: Yeah I do. If you scratch beneath the surface, if you go on the internet and look for stuff you'll always find stuff and there's always stuff out there that doesn't operate on the level of a label like we are, you know, Century Media. There's a lot of stuff obviously underneath that, and we see because the gigs that we play out, especially on mainland Europe, we know a lot of bands that are, you know, DIYing it and things like that you know and some great bands as well who quite frankly, not to get into the game of slagging bands off, because I think that's fucking pointless but some of the bands that are on labels, when you listen to some of the ones that remain underground there's a gulf of quality. The one's that are on the underground are much, much better than some of the bands signed to bigger labels. Again it's like a real paradox, a real sort of irony thing really but certainly there's still an underground and there always will be it will never go away.



MM: Do you think that politics still has a role to play in music. I'm talking like when they first reared their ugly heads in the 1960s and..

Barney: Yeah absolutely, it depends how you look at it really because it's like politics, for some people or political music they go 'oh, yawn, is that the time?'

MM: The political discourse I mean, the sharing of ideas...

Barney: Certainly. Napalm is, of course a political band you could say. You know the way I try to bring it down to a level more of humanitarianism and stuff because at the end of the day I have a particular perspective that leans towards the left, of course I do but more than anything in terms of lyrics and stuff I think that I like to consider myself a true humanitarian the belief in people before profit and also try to get towards the situation where we stabilise. Yeah so I think politics does still have a part to play in music but there's many flavours to the musical spectrum: there's pure entertainment and there's bands that like to be informative to varying degrees and there's room for everything. I wouldn't dismiss and non-political band because I don't think that's right. Music's there for many things, you know, it's a form of entertainment, one of the few things that still has the ability to break down barriers so there's room for everything, there's room for bands that make statements that are big. People, always, talking about the attitudes of some of the bigger bands; there are people out there who once a band become big think their opinions are transparent now. That just doesn't help anything at all and when bands get big they put their points across to a lot more people you know and that's totally valid and I absolutely don't see anything wrong in that at all. There's room for it on totally different levels.

MM: Let's get away from the band a minute. Lets talk Barney. What do you do apart from the band these days?

Barney: I do a variety of things. I mean I'm never fucking still. I've never had time off, never have days off which is why I'm speaking to you on the phone right now rather than typing it out or whatever. I work for the Musicians Union. So effectively I sit on the committee in Birmingham, the general committee so basically – it's completely voluntary – basically I dedicate my time to musicians because I don't want them to be in the position I've been in. They deserve protection just like any other worker does because of course there's a train of thought that says you should never earn money for your music but I'm sorry to tell people this but musicians have to pay the rent like anyone else and buy the groceries like anyone else, they have to survive like everyone else so therefore they need protection you know. If the musicians don't earn any money it will only be filtered off by record labels, promoters, agents etcetera. So the musician needs protection and that's what I do, that's one of the things that I do and I'm really proud of it actually, I really get a lot of satisfaction from helping, you know. I used to do a bit of writing as you well know. I don't do much these days because Napalm has just been nuts, you know and I have been trying to allocate a bit more time to the Union and things like that and there's other stuff that I'd like to do as well. I've done a little bit of writing, I'd actually like to write some books, I've looked to move onto books now and I've had a couple of ideas but books are a big undertaking and I would need to devote a large chunk of time which I don't have at the moment, there's not any space there at the moment. I like to keep busy, I don't like to kick back. If I have any more than 3,4,5 days a week off at a time I start to get itchy feet and I start to feel like I should be doing something, why aren't I doing anything? And start slipping into laziness. So I like to keep moving. Onwards and upwards sort of thing.

MM: So how does Barney the front-man from Napalm Death differ from Mark Greenway?

Barney: Probably in terms of ferocity I guess because with the band playing live and on a record it's pretty ferocious stuff but I'm actually really a gentle person. I wouldn't say boo to a goose. Of course I get pretty riled up about things that we talk about in Napalm and other things. I do get fucking pissed off, you know what I mean? Of course I do, but I always try to use it constructively. That said when I'm in just normal mode, if you like I'm just pretty chilled, a very gentle person. I just try to be a good person without sounding like a sort of morality claim because it's really not – just try to be a good person.

MM: How does what you know about life now differ from what you thought it would be as a child?

Barney: I think when you're a child you know certain things and you probably get a lot off your parents. One thing I never actually agreed with - of course in some cases – was to never basically agree with your parents. Never like what your parents like. I think that that's basically inaccurate because some parents are really very open minded and they are really actually a good model. My parents were very open minded and they actually helped me a lot. I probably rebelled against my parents quite heavily at 16 or 17 being basically a pissed up silly arsehole, just being a kid you know going home getting pissed and listening to Siege and Negative Approach at fucking 3 o'clock in the morning completely blasted out of my head, you know, and that was my rebellion against my parents but to be honest mate I was completely fucking stupid because I actually needed my parents so and they would have helped me a lot in moving on as a teenager. But to a point, if you get really conservative oppressive parents then you're gonna tell them to get fucked in your own way but I don't think that's always the case. I actually learned quite a lot when I was a kid. My dad was a trade union man and I learned quite a lot from him, some very wise stuff. But of course going out into the world and discovering things for yourself you learn a lot more. Both from the countries that I've been in, I mean some of the most shockingly poor places in the world; it's opened my eyes even more than they were previously.

MM: So what's next for you guys then?

Barney: Well we've just done a massive European tour which you saw the start of. That was really good actually considering it was festival season across Europe it did really well. We're just doing, like, weekend festivals at the moment. We're going out to do one in the Ukraine next week and we've never been there so that should be good. Sweden and the Ukraine, just festivals at weekends then we're going to America. We're going out with Obituary, they're sort of headlining and there's a couple of other bands on it. So we're doing that then we come back doing the Resistance, it's now called Persistence because Eastpak aren't sponsoring it anymore but basically it's the Easkpak tour, and it's Hatebreed, us and Agnostic Front flip flopping, and there's a couple of other bands underneath that, so that should be quite good. That takes us up to the end of the year and then we're going back to America again in January…we're on the wheel at the moment, lots to do…

MM: Anything that you want to add?

Barney: Yeah, and I know it always sounds like the same answer, but thanks to everyone for the support. We've been around for a long time, looking back for me, it's sixteen, seventeen years since I've been in Napalm, and it's has been a fucking roller coaster to use the old cliché and quote whats-his-face from Westlife…There's been a lot of ups and downs, but we're fucking hanging in there man, and when you've been around for that amount of years, you don't take people for granted, you do appreciate it, and turn up and turn up and enjoy what you're doing and listen to what you say. It is much appreciated…

Bruja
Marshall

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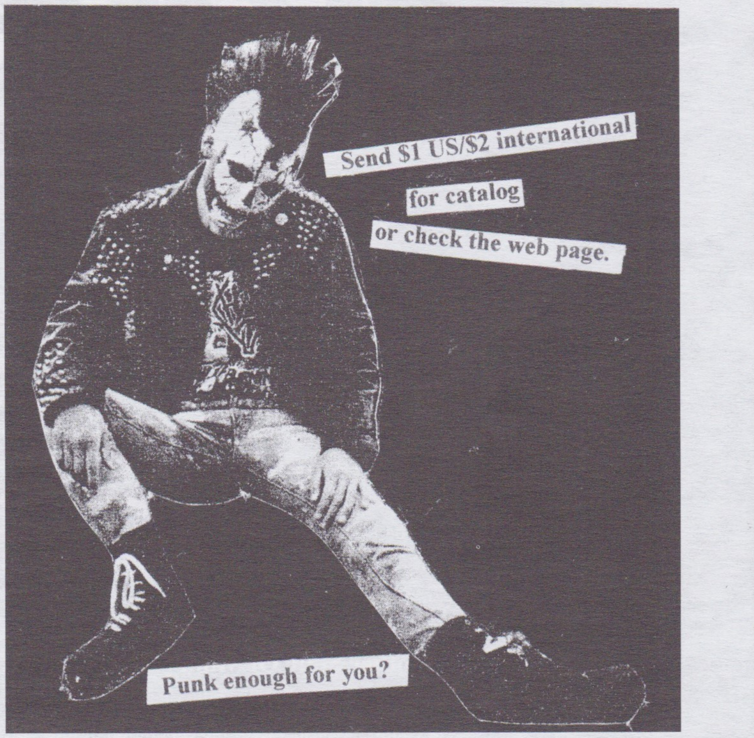

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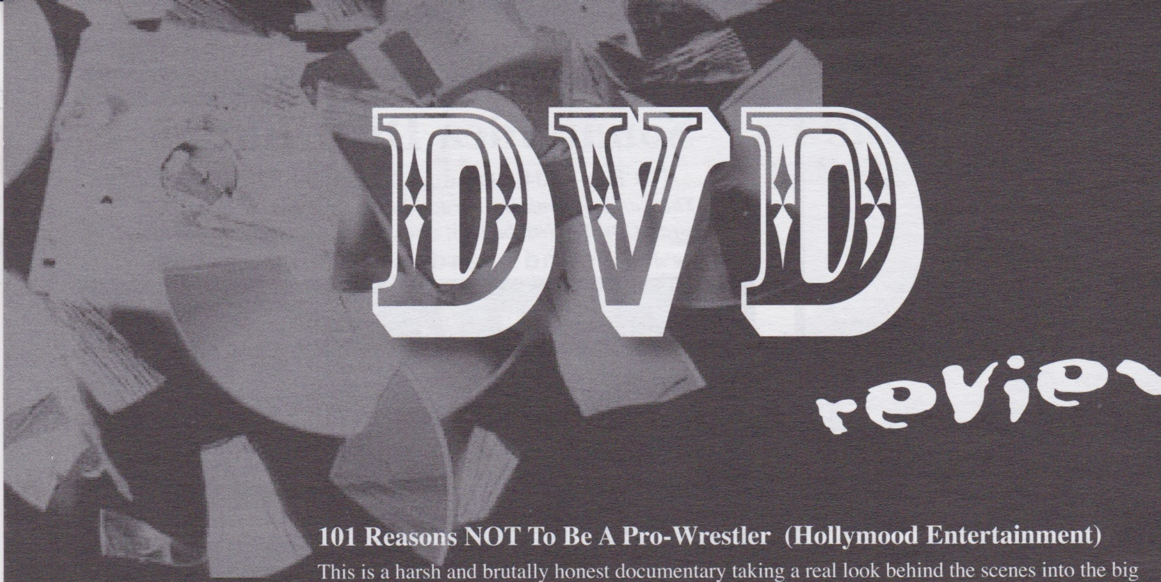


DVD reviews

101 Reasons NOT To Be A Pro-Wrestler (Hollymood Entertainment)

This is a harsh and brutally honest documentary taking a real look behind the scenes into the big business that is American pro wrestling and it really does make it look like it is a worse job to have than a summer job on a production line in a shitty factory listening to radio 2 for 12 hours a night. In genuine honesty this is a real must have for any real fan of the ultimate athletic soap opera and a real mind changer for anyone who thought it was just all fake and glamorous. One look an New Jacks fucked up mangled head will change your mind forever.
This DVD shows the reality of working in such a two faced business with the likes of Diamond Dallas Page constantly refusing to give comment on anything even resembling politics and Joanie Laurer's story of her own experiences from starting as a pioneer of women's wrestling right through till now. Need 101 reasons, no, not really, here are two: Vampiro having to power-slam a guy through a table while balancing on his broken leg and (once again) New Jacks fucked up mangled brow. Elgavistan

Another State Of Mind (Timebomb / Kung Fu)

You ever have your folks tell you that they remember where they were when Kennedy was assassinated? Or, as I'm slowly beginning to suspect, for the generation of kids currently at shows, that statement will magically transform itself into their folks telling them that they remember seeing "Star Wars" in the cinema…and you wonder why the scene is slowly turning to shit? Bloody kids…
Well, I remember where I was the first time I saw this flick – at a house-party a long time ago, and so engrossed in it was yours truly, that I promptly forgot about my beer and the girl I was trying to pull. See, further testament to the fact that punk rock ruins your life…ha, ha, ha! "Another State Of Mind" was a fascinating documentary about two bands (Youth Brigade and Social Distortion), with Minor Threat also getting involved, pulling together (at the start of the BYO days) to organise their own grassroots tour. Doing it true DIY style, like their Canadian cousins DOA, this was groundbreaking stuff back in 1982. The film focuses on the trials and tribulations of the tour, with both the band and various other folks talking about the tour, punk rock and a whole lot of other stuff. Pure, grassroots punk rock, and it was bloody incredible. So, how does it fair today? Different format and all? Well, the more things change, the more they stay the same. It's till bloody great, and pretty much compulsive viewing (were Mike Ness and Shawn Stern ever that young? Jeez..), but what makes this release all the more interesting are the commentary racks by the Sterns and Mike Ness…Ah, the good old days…Come on, find out how good, and how much fun punk rock used to be…Tim Mass Movement

Assert – History: Reloaded (Hideous Eye)

After all this time no one has really picked these guys up for more than one record at a time and finds the band moving from label to label and here we find them self releasing their first venture into the world of DVD. This is truly a great no frills look into the world of Assert who are one of the UK's most powerful hardcore machines that turn up and destroy whatever stands in it's way. Adversity has made them stronger and here this gives you an amazing insight into their live persona with a collection of live recordings of line ups and tracks and venues through the history of Assert along with a photo gallery and 2 promo videos. This is one DVD I recommend punks and hardcore heads around the world need to pick up like yesterday. Pete.

Candlemass – The Curse Of Candlemass Live In Stockholm 2003 (Escapi)

Now here's a name that's been knocking about for a few years but can honestly say I have never checked out before. Double disc DVD set with disc 1 being the live farewell set from their hometown Stockholm in 2003 featuring Demons Gate, The Well Of Souls, Into The Unfathomed Tower, Ancient Dreams, Witches, A Cry From The Crypt and other classics. Disc 2 covers some early live footage from 87, 89 and 92 and what I think is a history of Candlemass interview with the band which is sadly in Swedish but you can set the subtitles on and read the translation of what is a pretty comprehensive guide to the band. Pretty good shit on the whole and one for Candlemass fans. Pete

Cradle Of Filth – Peace Through Superior Firepower (Roadrunner)

You know, over the years I've seen a lot of bands, been to a lot of shows, and for the most part, the bands were great, and I enjoyed the shows. But I could count on both hands the number of AMAZING bands that I've seen, and one of these would be Cradle Of Filth. Musically they were tight as a Nun's chuff, the shows were never less than spectacular and the atmosphere that they created, truly inspirational…so, how would their latest DVD, featuring their performance from the Elysee Montmarte in Paris on the 2nd April 2005 compare to the real thing? Pretty bloody glad actually. The sound is superb and the band are on fire as they rage through their set, the show being captured in all its glory. So, now when I'm feeling a little nostalgic, or waiting for the to tour to again, I just pop this little bugger into the magical DVD machine and be transported straight back to the guts and glory. The DVD also features some pretty funny shenanigans that the band captured on their last few tours, and some ins studio madness from the recording of the last album…and, there's also a frankly hilarious segment, an in-store signing filmed and narrated by the one and only Alex Chandon (for goodness sake would one of you studio bod's sign the most talented Horror director in UK? Applications in writing to Mr. Chandon), and if that wasn't enough, a selection of the band's promo video's for your viewing pleasure. If you're not a fan already, then you need to check out what all the fuss is about – come one, come all, the freakshow has rolled into town, and you don't even have to leave the comfort of your sofa to bear witness to it's many pleasures…Tim Mass Movement

Dance Hall Crashers – Live at the House of Blues L.A. DVD (Kung Fu Films)

In general ska core, or punk rock with ska influences just doesn't do it for me. With the exception of a band like Mighty Mighty Bosstones who just know how to incorporate both very different styles in a mature way as many bands just play punk rock and use ska as a gimmick. Dance Hall Crashers have been around for a long time and also could never catch my attention. For some reason this DVD opened my eyes and ears. Good stuff indeed. Good songs, energetic set and a very simple punk rock setting. Besides the ska / punk angle the 60's rock n roll influences give them the right vibe. The two beautiful singers, both in voice and appearance, Elyse and Karina know how to present the band, great and funny one liners, nice dance moves, good contact with the audience. Every rainy and sad day will be a day of sun and cheers with this DVD. The special features on this disc don't really add something extra, it's the 23 live set that makes you want this 18th edition in the "Show Must Go Off" series or not. Martijn Welzen

D.R.I. – Live At CBGB's, 1984 (Beer City)

Right, I guess most folks that know me, know that I love DRI. The band that changed the face of HC, not once, but twice – no-one had heard anything as fast or viscous as their debut which immediately spawned a thousand imitators, and with the release of their third album, the record that remains a lynchpin of the whole Crossover movement (where do you think the genre took it's name from?). "CBGB" captures the bands performance at the home of HC on their first US tour, and apart from the fact that they all look like they're fresh out of high school (were Kurt and Spike ever that young?), it's an energetic, no frills, straight down to it high intensity performance, the kind that DRI have built their reputation on. It's kind of odd watching them power through forty songs in as many minutes, not pausing from breath, just laying the smack-down on anyone who got in their way, twenty one years later. The sound's actually pretty good, being taken from the sound board master, and only dips towards the end of the set, but you know, if you'd have been there, you'd have been all thrashed out from spending far too much time in the pit, so it kind of makes the whole thing that little bit more authentic y'know? Hot damn, if this wasn't a blast to watch…plus, there's another set from a last minute show that the guys set up on the same tour at a Masonic Temple, on which the picture is a little fuzzy and the sound isn't great, but it's almost like seeing the band after drinking a six pack and not having to pay for the beer, which you would have drunk had you been there originally. Bloody bargain, and when you throw some Kristian Svitak Euro. Skate footage (he's sponsored by the band folks!) and liner notes from Spike into the mix, the whole DVD become irresistible for young and old punkers (and even metalheads) alike. Yeah, this is my idea of fun…Tim Mass Movement

Dropkick Murphys – On The Road With…(Hellcat)

Yeah, I know this is kind of old, but it was sent through for review and so reviewed it's gonna be…"One The Road" is probably the most comprehensive DVD package I've ever seen a band issue, it's literally huge, from the ass kicking hometown St. Patrick's day set (one of these days I'll make it to Boston for one of these shows) in which they storm through all their classics (and a cover of "Alcohol"), to the Warped footage, to the round the world camcorder lunacy that they've captured and included, through to the Labour Day documentary in which they lay their cards on the table and the short but sweet documentary which sea's them play a

Bruin's game and the inclusion of all their video's to date, this is one heck of a DVD. It's taken me most of the day to actually watch it from beginning to end, and I'm kind of left wondering how they managed to fit it all on there? Doesn't matter though, as it's one heck of a punk rock package for any consumer to wade through. Not a second wasted either…and that can't be bad in anyone's book…Tim Mass Movement

Give 'Em The Boot – A Film By Tim Armstrong (Hellcat)

Another label making the step from CD compilations to DVD compilations. It's titled as a film by Tim Armstrong but really falls into the same vein as all the other labels who do compilation DVD's giving us a collection of live treats from the roster and a few other treats. Featuring treats from the likes of Nekromantix, Lars Frederiksen And The Bastards, Horrorpops, Joe Strummer, Roger Miret, Transplants, Tiger Army and others along with about 8 videos from Rancid which I feel is a bit overkill from them but them 2 of them are special – them jamming No Fun backstage with Iggy Pop and Davey Havoc joining them onstage for Radio. Plus there's a short little piece on a Joe Strummer tribute which set's the whole thing off. The other thing I like about this is that it's shot mostly in grainy black and white that gives it a great feel as well. Not bad for their first step into the DVD compilation field. Pete.

Holidays In The Sun (Cherry Red)

So the good people at Cherry Red have finally got round to releasing a 2 disc DVD of the HITS festival from Blackpool in 1996. This DVD is 3 and 3 quarter hours of punk action from the likes of Alternative TV, The Drones, GBH, 999, UK Subs, Sham 69, Vibrators, Buzzcocks, X Ray Spex, One Way System, Casualties, Anti Nowhere League, Funeral Dress, English Dogs and absolutely loads more with little interviews in between as well. This is a great document / collection of stuff from the 3 day festival that will be a great memorable piece of history to own for the people who were there or for those who wished they were there to experience what they missed. Pete

Lennon – Beyond Warped Live Music Series (Immergent)

Another live Warped tour performance DVD release this time covering the band called Lennon (never heard of them incidentally). Female fronted rock band who to be honest, I lost interest during the opening song as it is not something I found compelling to listen too. Sorry but borrow it off someone who has bought it first to see if you like it. Pete

Machine Head – Elegies (Roadrunner Records)

And so my favourite live DVD is born. Never have I had a DVD I wanted to play over and over again. Machine Head has of course given me three classic metal albums, "Burn My Eyes", "The Most Things Change" and "Through The Ashes of Empires", so hearing some of these songs played at the Brixton Academy in London you can understand my for urge of playing it. And I know the band has released more records, but I would not consider the other two, "The Burning Red" and "Supercharger" to be classics. Anyway, with amazing sound and vision, you get to hear 13 of the bands best songs including "Imperium", "Old", "Ten Ton Hammer", "Davidian" and "Take My Scars". What stands out if you compare Machine Head to a lot of other bands it has to be their hardcore approach. Honesty, no nonsense, loud guitars, beer and cursing. Isn't that what metal has been about since the early days? Amazing also the interviews with Robb Flynn and the other bandmembers about how Machine Head almost broke up after the band got dropped by Roadrunner after "Supercharger". It's all about how an amazing metal band can climb to dazzling heights, fall back until they hit rock bottom and climb out of that shithole to give us the fabulous "Through The Ashes of Empires". There are a couple of more features to be found on this disc, but it's all about the live experience in the end. Martijn Welzen

Motorhead – 30th Anniversary (SPV)

I think this may have been the DVD that was released with the recent re-release of the last album Inferno but I may be wrong. Anyway this is essential as its Motor - fucking - head and that's all that needs to be said. Featuring live versions filmed at the Hammersmith Apollo of classics like Bomber, We Are The Road Crew, Love For Sale and newer ones like Killers and Whore House Blues. There's also a video and making of video of Whore House Blues, a Joe Petagno piece (the logo artist) and a Motorhead story entitled The Guts And The Glory. Hunt this fucker down as you need this if you consider yourself a head fan. Pete MM.

'NIGHTVEIL' Galaxy International Pictures/AC Comics

When MM's head honcho Tim asked me to pen a few reviews for his esteemed mag, promising me films galore and more quality freebies than my heart could ever possibly desire, I never thought for one minute I'd be derided with anything as inexcusably feeble as this. Now, don't get me wrong, I've sat through more than my fair share of crap films over the years, and often laughed knowingly along with them, but this trashes the whole 'so crap it's good' train of thought by being just too fucking crap for its own good. Within seconds of the 'tittilating' opening credits, it's apparent that 'Nightveil' takes the definition of 'crap' to a completely new low... this is some truly sorry shit. The DVD box paints up some kind of intergalactic battle of good versus evil, with a scantily-clad white witch (some tart in a cape) and a quasi-dimensional entity (some twat in a cape) engaging an evil sorceress (another tart, but this time with big boots) for possession of an all-powerful 'prima-gem', but don't be fooled - PLEASE, don't be fooled - into thinking there is ANYTHING here of any artistic merit. An appalling script, terrible cinematography, utterly dire acting, laughable special effects, infantile scenery and costumes, a godawful soundtrack, dead-in-the-water 'action sequences', and misguided, lame, clunky direction all add up to only one thing - a total waste of time, money and effort. Thanks Tim... you bastard. Ian Glasper

Out Cold – Looking Through Communist Eyes (Acme Records)

At last, a live show DVD of Out Cold. If I can't get to see John and the boys live here in the UK then this DVD shot live in St. Petersburg, Russia in 2004 will have to suffice. Don't expect slick cinematography though because this is shot how a DIY hardcore show should be shot on video like - raw and as it happens by an audience member. Out Cold blast through their 18 song set of fast paced raging hardcore in the way Out Cold are legendary at with tracks including Own Worst Enemy, It Went Bang, Spaceshot, A Is For Asshole, No Point, Like Clockwork, Web Of Lies, Stray Bullet and others. This is great and how I would expect a live hardcore show to look on film. I got to get some of these to stock on the distro. Pete MM

Sheer Terror – Beaten By The Fists Of God DVD (Thorp / GSR)

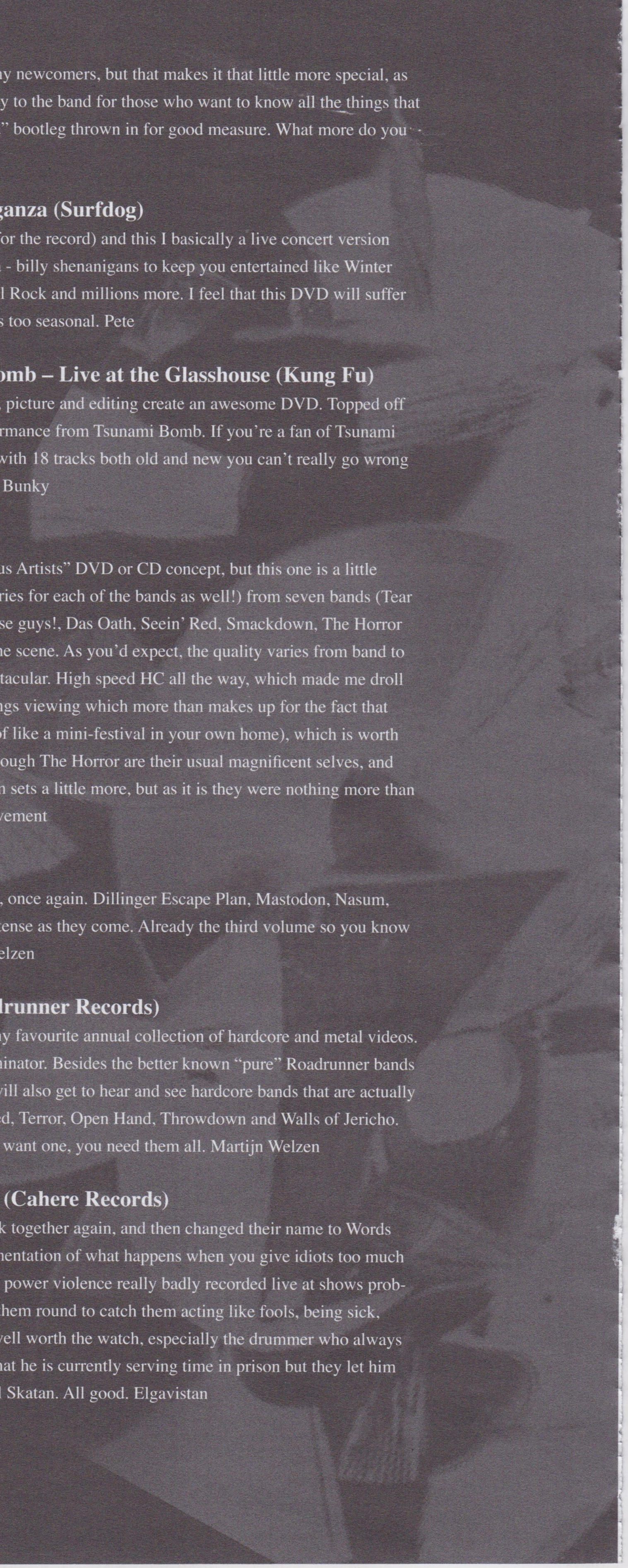
I guess I'm still the only guy who was called a "Nasty, hate filled thug with a big mouth" by a whole university department, but as my wife thinks I'm a "Charming" guy, it's all swings and roundabouts…whatever. Anyways, let's move on. Finally, it's here, The Sheer Terror DVD. New York's finest Hardcore bar none, Sheer Terror were always one of those bands that you either loved or hated. I've never met anyone who thought they were "Well, y'know, okay…". This band polarised opinion like no other before, or since. Bless 'em. I guess by now, you know which camp I fall into right? This whole package has been put together with love, respect and attention to detail, the documentary alone is worth the price of admission, featuring the band and people around the band talking the history and impact that Sheer Terror had on their lives – with Paul Bearer in full flow. Guy should have been a stand up comedian, as he's literally one of the funniest motherfuckers out there – period. No other HC band spoke to me the way that these guys did, Paul's lyrics summed up my life and the way I was feeling. He didn't preach about the benefits of this or that lifestyle, or about political issues that had no bearing on everyday existence, he talked about real life and how fucked up it could be with an honesty that was practically none existent. Then it's on to the fun part, the Sheer Terror reunion show from CBGB's in October of last year. Christ, the sound quality is possibly the most impressive live recording I've ever heard, it's bloody incredible, crystal clear without sacrificing power or volume. Yeah, I've spent the last two days watching this over and over again, and I'm not even starting to get bored. Think I'm going to be watching this time and time again for a good while to come...If you only pick up one DVD this year, make sure it's "Beaten By The Fist Of God". Cream of the crop…Tim Mass Movement

Social Distortion – Live In Orange County, January 19th 2003 (Kung Fu)

This really is a no brainer… The chances that I'm going to dig a Social Distortion DVD are almost like taking a doper to Columbia and telling him not to sample the local product. It just isn't going to happen…As with any SD release, what you get is exactly what you expect. Social Distortion on fire, doing what they best, playing rock-n-roll, playing like it was the last time they were ever going to walk out on to a stage. Damn, makes me wish that I'd been there, singing along, having the time of my life…This time I even figured out how to get to the extra's, and there's a bloody ton of them! Interview footage, pre-show footage, you name it, it's on here. I only wish that other bands could be this good, but then again, if they were, Social Distortion wouldn't be the titans that they are…Hell, it's Social Distortion, and nothing that I say is going to influence you one way or another, you knew if you were going to pick this up before you even started reading…Tim Mass Movement

S.O.D – 20 Years Of Dysfunction (Megaforce)

Love them or hate them, there's no denying the impact that the Stormtroopers Of Death have had upon both the HC and metal scenes, and this time around Billy Milano has his say, paints his picture of SOD from his own perspective, and you know what? It's great. All the live footage is spot on, loud, nasty and fast, just as you'd expect from the band, concentrating on the "Speak English…" tracks – I would have liked to have seen some songs from "Bigger Than…" but that's a minor niggle and not something I'm likely to dwell on for too long. The in between footage, and backstage stuff is as hilarious and entertaining as you'd expect it to be given that the package is Billy's baby, and the interview that Liz from Metal Maniacs conducts with Billy is also pretty bloody enter-



taining. It's a DVD that I guess is aimed toward fans rather than any newcomers, but that makes it that little more special, as it' been pout together for the specific purpose of opening a doorway to the band for those who want to know all the things that they didn't previously…And you get the infamous "Pussywhipped" bootleg thrown in for good measure. What more do you want? Blood? Just get it already okay? Tim Mass Movement

The Brian Setzer Orchestra – Christmas Extravaganza (Surfdog)

Again I feel this guy needs no introduction (Stray Cats main man for the record) and this I basically a live concert version of the CD reviewed in the CD section. Loads of Christmas rock - a - billy shenanigans to keep you entertained like Winter Wonderland, Santa Claus Is Back In Town, Let It Snow, Jingle Bell Rock and millions more. I feel that this DVD will suffer the same fate as the CD and only come out for 1 week a year as it's too seasonal. Pete

The Show Must Go Off - Episode#17 - Tsunami Bomb – Live at the Glasshouse (Kung Fu)

These Dvd's seem to get better as time goes on. Top quality sound, picture and editing create an awesome DVD. Topped off by a powerful, energetic, tight and unbelievably unpop-punk performance from Tsunami Bomb. If you're a fan of Tsunami Bomb or just looking for a music DVD this one could be for you, with 18 tracks both old and new you can't really go wrong and with special features to boot your in for a true punk rock treat. Bunky

Various Artists – Live Target (Coalition)

I'm not usually one of those people that buy into the whole "Various Artists" DVD or CD concept, but this one is a little different. A collection of short live sets (and flyer and picture galleries for each of the bands as well!) from seven bands (Tear It Up, Larm – I didn't even know that there was any footage of these guys!, Das Oath, Seein' Red, Smackdown, The Horror and The Rites) that was filmed here and there by various folks in the scene. As you'd expect, the quality varies from band to band, but taking that into account, it's a veritable DVD thrash spectacular. High speed HC all the way, which made me droll and sway as though I were the resident village idiot…A fine evenings viewing which more than makes up for the fact that I've never been able to get to any of the 1in12 Festivals (it's kind of like a mini-festival in your own home), which is worth picking up for the footage of The Rite and Smackdown alone, although The Horror are their usual magnificent selves, and the Tear It Up footage is also damn fine. Wish I'd enjoyed the Larm sets a little more, but as it is they were nothing more than a curio…Ah well, cant have everything I suppose…Tim Mass Movement

Various - Recollection #3 DVD (Relapse Records)

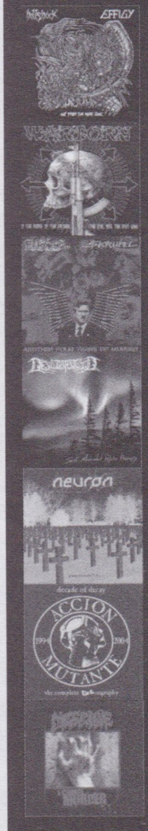
16 videos from Relapse artists are collected to blow you brains out, once again. Dillinger Escape Plan, Mastodon, Nasum, Agoraphobic Nosebleed to mention a few, all as outrageous and intense as they come. Already the third volume so you know what to expect from the leading label in extreme music. Martijn Welzen

Various - Roadrunner Roadrage 2005 DVD (Roadrunner Records)

Yeah, the 2005 edition of this great video comp. series. Probably my favourite annual collection of hardcore and metal videos. 31 different bands that have the word "heavy" as a common denominator. Besides the better known "pure" Roadrunner bands like Slipknot, Killswitch Engage, Machine Head and Soulfly you will also get to hear and see hardcore bands that are actually from US based labels Trustkill and Ferret like Blood Has Been Shed, Terror, Open Hand, Throwdown and Walls of Jericho. The label should do subscriptions for the "Roadrage" series, if you want one, you need them all. Martijn Welzen

Words That Burn - Spawning Ground For Hatred (Cahere Records)

Words that burn used to be called Remission, they split up, got back together again, and then changed their name to Words that burn. Why? Don't know, anyway, basically this is video documentation of what happens when you give idiots too much beer, skateboards and instruments. Magic, can't fault it. Old school power violence really badly recorded live at shows probably by their mates on shitty bust up video cameras and following them round to catch them acting like fools, being sick, falling over and generally hurting themselves. The interviews are well worth the watch, especially the drummer who always looks stoned to death and talks about how much he loves the fact that he is currently serving time in prison but they let him out to work in his tattoo parlor and play gigs. Kiss the goat and hail Skatan. All good. Elgavistan



Crimes Against Humanity Records / Distribution

Hellshock / Effigy Split Cd Out Early October. Check out www.cahrecords.com for details.
End of All "Same Shit But Different" Cd Blistering Swedish Thrash featuring an ex member of Wolfpack. Manditory
Cripple Bastards "Your Lies In Check" Cd Re-issue from this long-out-of-print classic. Ferocious grindcore at its best.
Wartorn "In the Name of the Father, Son and the Holy War" Cd A brutal style of Swedish styled State of Fear driven insanity.
Massmord "Inget Liv / Ingen Dod" Cd Swedish hardcore with piercing guitar leads, brutal bass, and whirlwind drumming, dual fe/male trade off vocals.
Phobia / Skrupel Split CdEp $5.50 Ferocious grindcore from both bands. This is Phobia's best stuff in years in my opinion. Essential.
Insuiciety "Believe And Die" Cd Totally devastating and refreshingly original doom/sludgecore in vein of Eyehategod and Grief.
Desolatevoid "Self Medicated Psycho Therapy" Cd Consider this an album that is anchored in a more straight ahead SOILENT GREEN, sucks the bone marrow out of EYEHATEGOD, and smokes up a little HIGH ON FIRE. Maybe then you'll understand why this shit is too heavy. (Blabbermouth.net)
Neuron "Gleichschritt" Cd Wicked grindcore from Germany. Some of the best I've heard. Neuron is all about grinding, thick, powerful grindcore
Gaurithoth "Perverse" Cd Raging European Black Metal. A little like Impaled Nazarene, Gaurithoth explodes on their debut album of pure insanity.
Mesrine "I Choose Murder" Cd Essential grindcore / Metal with a style to that similar to Dahmer This is awesome grindcore.
Diskonto "Watch Us Burn" Cd They are from Sweden so you should already know this is awesome. Their best album to date for sure.
Accion Mutante "The Complete Discography" Cd Everything they have recorded so far. Highly Essential. Total Crust / Metal.
Wartorn "Adolph Bushler" 7" Scandinavian thrash like State of Fear. This is limited to 300 Copies only.
To What End? "Concealed Below The Surface" Cd / Lp I consider this band to be the best Swedish Hardcore band going right now.
Misery "Production Through Destruction" Cd Re-release of this hard to find classic crust album from the early 90's
Pisshead Blues Band "s/t" Cd Blues lounge rock spewing from members of Civil Disobedience and Misery. Nice and relaxing and awesome.
Uncurbed "A Nightmare In Daylight" Cd Reissue from the 90's. Swedish hardcore that'll knock your socks off with brand new art.
Audio Kollaps "Music From An Extreme, Sick World" Cd / Lp A brutal mix of Crust, Grind and Metal. The best combination possible.
Head Hits Concrete "Thy Kingdom Come Undone" Cd Discography of their stuff to date. Head splitting ferocious grindcore.
Homoiratus "Apocalypse" Cd Pulverizing Grindcore / Death Metal from Greece. Comparisons to Rotten sound come to mind.

Beyond Description "A Road To A Brilliant Future" Cd / Lp // **Despite** "No Promise of Tomorrow" Cd / Lp
Urban Head Raw "Human Instinct" Cd Japanese Crust. // **Agathocles** "Alive And Mincing" Cd (Ltd to 1000)
Words That Burn "Spawning Ground For Hatred" Cd / Lp (Mailorder Ltd to 100 Red Vinyl) // **To What End?** "The Purpose Beyond" Cd
Remains of the Day "Hanging on Rebellion" Cd // **Asschapel** "Fire And Destruction" Cd // **Disgust** "The Horror Of It All" Cd / Lp
Facedowninshit "Shit Bloody Shit" Cd // **Wolfpack** "Allday Hell" Cd // **Misery** "Early Years" Cd
Remains of the Day "An Underlying Frequency" Cd // **Misery / Eextinction of Mankind** Split Cd

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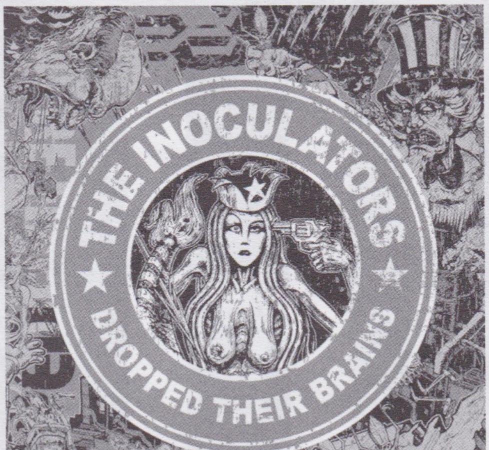

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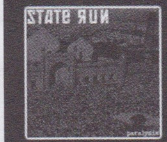

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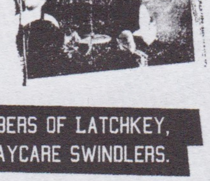

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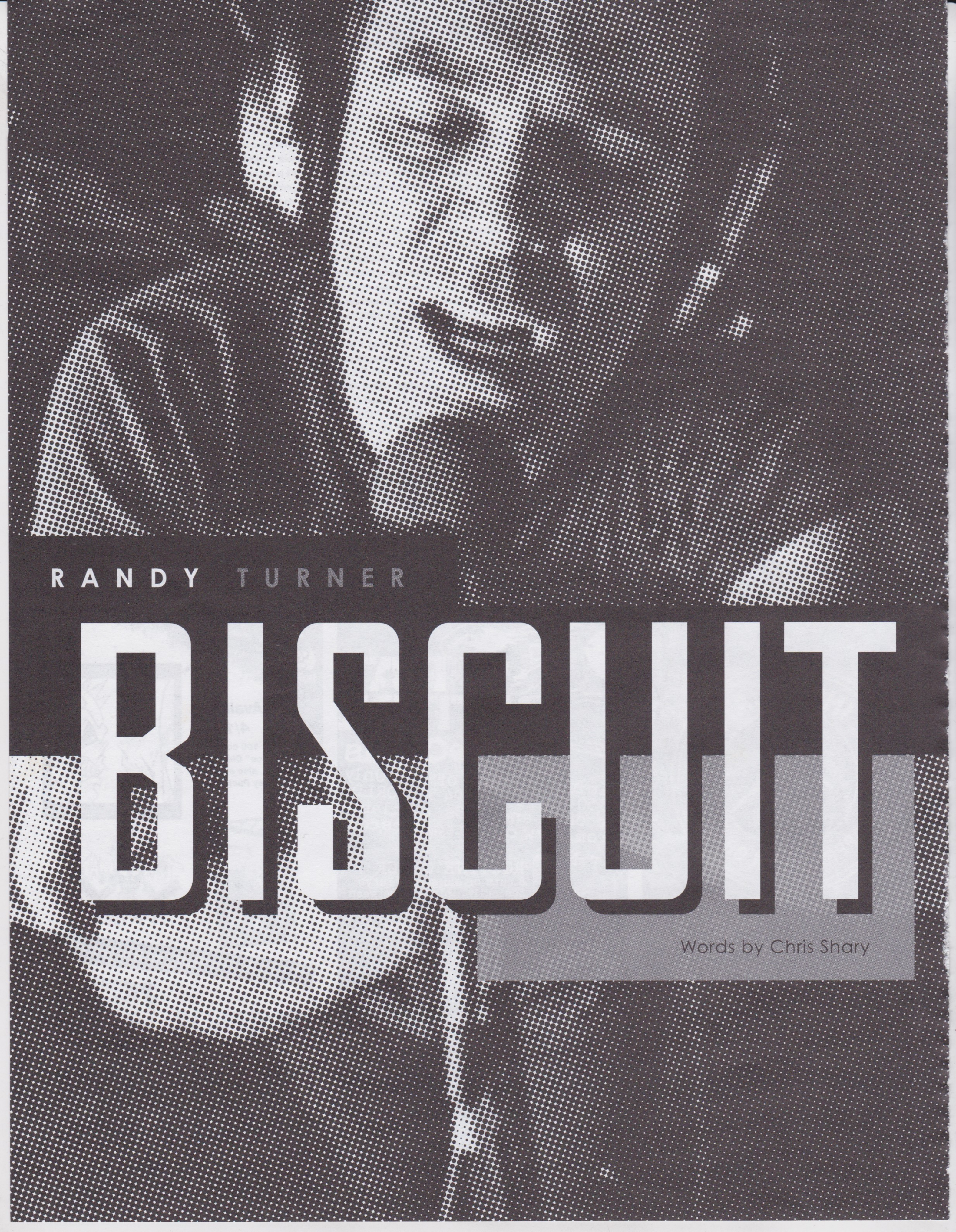


RANDY TURNER

BISCUIT

Words by Chris Shary

Friday August 19th was a horrible day for me. I was on my way home from a terrible retreat, when I spoke to my wife who did not sound her characteristically bubbly self. I knew something was amiss, but she didn't really want to tell me. I pressed her and she simply said, "Randy died.". At first I had to think who did we know named Randy who was kinda ready for death, you know some old relative who I couldn't place, or a friend of the family. Then it hit me, MY Randy, Randy Turner, Biscuit. I'm not going to say the lame ass ,"I still can't believe it" (although I can't), nope, that's not what Randy would have wanted. Randal J Turner, known to most as Biscuit of the Big Boys was always Randy to me. I met Randy in 97 when I was trying to reproduce an old Big Boys t-shirt, and somehow I felt like I did not have the right to call him Biscuit. Biscuit was a nickname he earned, and at the time I had no right to assume I should call him that (I realize that that particular sentence really gives away a lot). In the punk rock world, we're not supposed to have idols, or hero, or role models, but dammit, I always have.

People I looked up to were always the fringe people who did something because they felt they had to do it. In that respect, Randy was a hero of mine. When I first heard the Big Boys in 85 something connected with me. They spoke my language and were something pretty damn special and extremely unique. The Big Boys didn't want to be idols, or above anyone. I mean they're the one's who really pushed DIY in a way that I had never seen before. Randy, Tim, and Chris really wanted to start something and pass it on. You could tell that from anyone who ever crossed their paths. They were special. I knew it, and I felt so lucky, and smart to have discovered them. Their slogan "Now Go Start Your Own Band" meant so much more to me than just a call to arms to start a band. It was a huge statement that begged you to get up and do something creative, something positive, and to fight the apathy that surrounds us everyday. The Big Boys were freaks, even in a freak scene. It took balls to do what they did. It was always challenging, but above it all it was always fun. That's the one key element that seemed missing in so many early 80's hardcore acts. The fun just wasn't there. Intelligent, creative, pro-active, and fun, man sign me up! As a budding artist in the mid 80's I loved everything about how the Big Boys presented themselves. When I realized that Tim, and Randy did almost all of their art I was even more blown away than before. I instantly felt an even stronger connection to them. We were equals in some way because of this. So fast forward to me helping put together the rerelease of the Big Boys Wreck Collection. At this point I had started to become friends with Randy and Tim, and found we really were equals in many respects. The more I got to know them the more I was impressed by their attitudes and their unceasing desire to create. Above and beyond anything, Randy was an artist, and an artist of really high caliber. I wish the art world would have recognized that sooner, but that's just par for the course. He was always working on something and was always so active. I guess that's one of the things I have a hard time accepting, and that's that Randy's art work has ended. Randy was a huge inspiration to me, and as I've come to realize, countless others as well. I miss him like crazy and I wish we had some more time together. All I have to say is wherever you find inspiration you should recognize it, get everything you can out of it, and take nothing for granted.

— Chris Shary

Movie Reviews

by Jared

BREAKFAST ON PLUTO

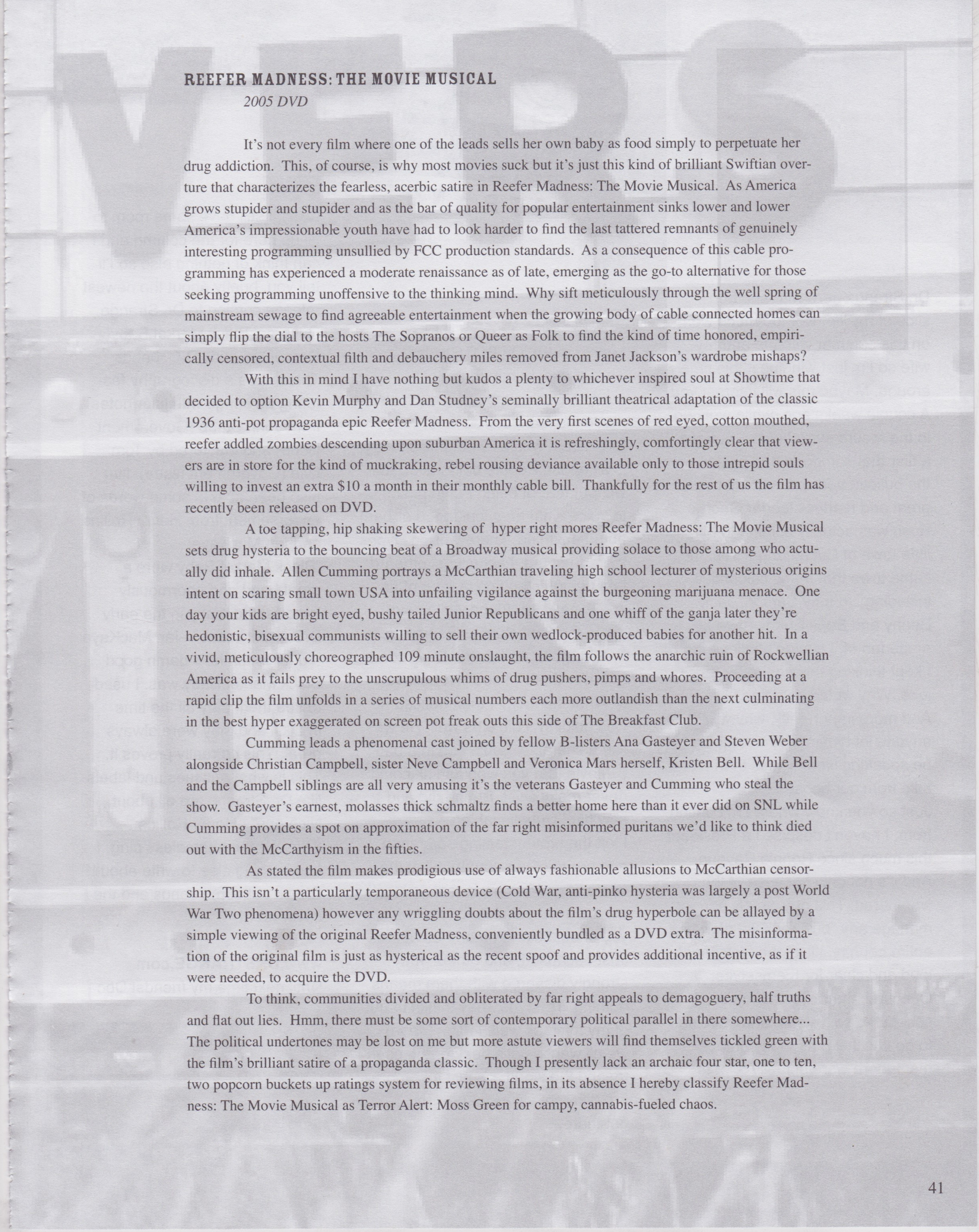
dir. Neil Jordan 2005

If Neil Jordan were a musician Breakfast on Pluto would be his greatest hits album. Boasting an impressive cast the film features Jordan regulars Liam Neeson and Stephen Rea alongside newcomers Cillian Murphy and Ruth Negga. Assembled out of familiar themes Breakfast on Pluto exhibits the political strife impressed upon the Sligo, Ireland native alongside the Freudian, psychological tenor so central to much of the director's other work. Jordan spins these themes while covering a Tim Burton Big Fish-esque sense of surreal wonderment, resulting in a curiously whimsical tale of unfailing optimism in the face of near misanthropy.

Set in a fictional town in the northernmost point of the Irish Republic, Breakfast on Pluto centers around an orphaned gay youth, Patrick "Kitten" Braden, searching across Ireland and the UK for the mother that left him, leaving him in the throes of the Irish Civil War, religious persecution, urban violence and political strife. From a far the parallels to the director's other works are readily apparent. Jordan's overlooked masterpiece The Miracle also features an Irish youth searching for the mother who abandoned him while the film's political themes of Northern Irish violence are all too familiar for the director of the 1996 biopic of Irish freedom fighter Michael Collins. Irish violence has cameoed in some form or another in many of the director's other works, not the least of which being Crying Game, Jordan's other film about a transvestite caught in the cross hairs of IRA violence. While The Crying Game was something of a neo-noir and a melodrama this film is more of a sordid fairy tale exhibiting unrelenting optimism amidst violence and squalor. While the transvestite in question in The Crying Game was jaded by a lifetime of disappointment Patrick "Kitten" Braden is instead a precocious youth that refuses to capitulate to a homophobic society nor relinquish his innocence in an all too aggressive world.

Thematically Breakfast on Pluto showcases an evolution in tone for the director. It would be all too easy for Kitten to wallow in the misery of his surroundings but unlike Dil in The Crying Game Kitten refuses to let the world envelop his spirit. The shift in tone from victimization to individual perseverance is fitting for a world where gay culture is moving out of the closet and into the limelight of popular culture. Breakfast on Pluto arrives at a present renaissance of queer themes in independent film making however the film proves that this is a cultural emergence embraced not out of some sort of leftist Hollywood conspiracy, as many right wing dullards will allege, but because it is a timely, relevant assertion of quality film making. The film is astoundingly progressive as, unlike a great deal of queer cinema, Kitten manages to transcend a homophobic society. It's anarchy in the UK but Patrick Kitten Braden refuses to let the world crush his spirits or prevent him from carving a place of his own amidst the Queen's fascist regime. By the time Kitten is reborn as a celebrated cabaret performer in London his triumph over a violent, homophobic society is so moving it can soften even the most jaded among us.

Breakfast on Pluto is a unique fairy tale and a most curious juxtaposition, exhibiting a world filled with terrorists, murders and thugs alongside benevolent bikers, talking sparrows and roses that bloom out of nowhere. The film is not completely beyond reproach with its scores of undeveloped periphery characters and an excessive running time, but it is still one of the most unique narrative features in years and a must for the Neil Jordan neophyte and veteran alike.



REEFER MADNESS: THE MOVIE MUSICAL

2005 DVD

It's not every film where one of the leads sells her own baby as food simply to perpetuate her drug addiction. This, of course, is why most movies suck but it's just this kind of brilliant Swiftian overture that characterizes the fearless, acerbic satire in Reefer Madness: The Movie Musical. As America grows stupider and stupider and as the bar of quality for popular entertainment sinks lower and lower America's impressionable youth have had to look harder to find the last tattered remnants of genuinely interesting programming unsullied by FCC production standards. As a consequence of this cable programming has experienced a moderate renaissance as of late, emerging as the go-to alternative for those seeking programming unoffensive to the thinking mind. Why sift meticulously through the well spring of mainstream sewage to find agreeable entertainment when the growing body of cable connected homes can simply flip the dial to the hosts The Sopranos or Queer as Folk to find the kind of time honored, empirically censored, contextual filth and debauchery miles removed from Janet Jackson's wardrobe mishaps?

With this in mind I have nothing but kudos a plenty to whichever inspired soul at Showtime that decided to option Kevin Murphy and Dan Studney's seminally brilliant theatrical adaptation of the classic 1936 anti-pot propaganda epic Reefer Madness. From the very first scenes of red eyed, cotton mouthed, reefer addled zombies descending upon suburban America it is refreshingly, comfortingly clear that viewers are in store for the kind of muckraking, rebel rousing deviance available only to those intrepid souls willing to invest an extra $10 a month in their monthly cable bill. Thankfully for the rest of us the film has recently been released on DVD.

A toe tapping, hip shaking skewering of hyper right mores Reefer Madness: The Movie Musical sets drug hysteria to the bouncing beat of a Broadway musical providing solace to those among who actually did inhale. Allen Cumming portrays a McCarthian traveling high school lecturer of mysterious origins intent on scaring small town USA into unfailing vigilance against the burgeoning marijuana menace. One day your kids are bright eyed, bushy tailed Junior Republicans and one whiff of the ganja later they're hedonistic, bisexual communists willing to sell their own wedlock-produced babies for another hit. In a vivid, meticulously choreographed 109 minute onslaught, the film follows the anarchic ruin of Rockwellian America as it fails prey to the unscrupulous whims of drug pushers, pimps and whores. Proceeding at a rapid clip the film unfolds in a series of musical numbers each more outlandish than the next culminating in the best hyper exaggerated on screen pot freak outs this side of The Breakfast Club.

Cumming leads a phenomenal cast joined by fellow B-listers Ana Gasteyer and Steven Weber alongside Christian Campbell, sister Neve Campbell and Veronica Mars herself, Kristen Bell. While Bell and the Campbell siblings are all very amusing it's the veterans Gasteyer and Cumming who steal the show. Gasteyer's earnest, molasses thick schmaltz finds a better home here than it ever did on SNL while Cumming provides a spot on approximation of the far right misinformed puritans we'd like to think died out with the McCarthyism in the fifties.

As stated the film makes prodigious use of always fashionable allusions to McCarthian censorship. This isn't a particularly temporaneous device (Cold War, anti-pinko hysteria was largely a post World War Two phenomena) however any wriggling doubts about the film's drug hyperbole can be allayed by a simple viewing of the original Reefer Madness, conveniently bundled as a DVD extra. The misinformation of the original film is just as hysterical as the recent spoof and provides additional incentive, as if it were needed, to acquire the DVD.

To think, communities divided and obliterated by far right appeals to demagoguery, half truths and flat out lies. Hmm, there must be some sort of contemporary political parallel in there somewhere... The political undertones may be lost on me but more astute viewers will find themselves tickled green with the film's brilliant satire of a propaganda classic. Though I presently lack an archaic four star, one to ten, two popcorn buckets up ratings system for reviewing films, in its absence I hereby classify Reefer Madness: The Movie Musical as Terror Alert: Moss Green for campy, cannabis-fueled chaos.

Dr. STRANGE

Dr. Strange here with another slice of my life. Not too much went on this summer with me and my wife so I'm just winging it this time around. Maybe this will interest you. A couple weeks ago, while working in the record store I own, I noticed a flier that someone had posted on the bulletin board. It said that our great and fearless leader George Bush was actually coming to MY little town of Cucamonga. Yes, the same town that many celebrities including: Johnny Carson, Jack Benny and Bugs Bunny have all made fun of. I couldn't believe it! I kept thinking this had to be a joke. Why would he come here? And more importantly, why would anyone let him in? He was going to be speaking literally less than half a mile from our house.

Just so you know where I'm coming from, I haven't despised a President this much since Ronnie Raygun. And it's not only because of the war in Iraq. This guy simply cannot manage any "business" let alone an entire country. I'll let the factsspeak loud and clear for themselves.

Of course there was a protest scheduled so my wife and I decided to go check it out. To my amazement there were actually a lot of people there. On BOTH sides. That kind of bummed me out to see pro-Bush supporters but it also made me feel good as well. Why? Because it typifies what this country is all about. People being allowed, without fear of being put in prison, to voice what they feel [good or bad] about anything. There were all types there trust me. I actually overheard one nut job standing in front of us speaking to his friend while pointing to the "anti-Bush" side saying "You're going to see the Devil come out over there". I couldn't believe it. What the fuck? I then noticed he was holding a bible as well. He was like a character you'd see in a bad B-Movie that you would think could never really exist. But he did and I saw him! Unbelievable……

I left the protest feeling saddened and proud of our country all at the same time. My view is that as long as you have passion for your beliefs you should stand up and be heard. Just because I, and others, may strongly disagree with them means nothing. Trust me, they think I'm out of my mind as well. I think (hope) we all want what's best for the country and the world, it's just that there are different views on how to get there.

Okay, I still have some room to fill up here for the column and I can think of nothing else so I'll tell you, briefly about the newest release coming to Dr. Strange Records. Black Market Baby! One of the early D.C. bands. This will be a discography featuring 26 songs with liner notes from John Stabb (Government Issue) and Mastered by Tom Lyle (Government Issue). I've also been able to some words of endorsement from Henry Rollins and Ian MacKaye;

"Black Market Baby were a great band and enormously important to many in the early D.C. punk scene" –Ian MacKaye

"I'd forgotten how damn good Black Market Baby was. I used to see them play all the time in D.C. and they were always great. This cd really proves it. This is what reissues and labels like Dr. Strange are all about. Nice one" –Henry Rollins

Sorry for the shameless plug. I had nothing else to write about! Check out some songs and the cover art at:

www.DRSTRANGE.com

Until next time my friends! Doc

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ZINE reviews

Anarchoi #s 11, 12 and 13 (James Gemmell, 3 Hazelgrove, Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 7JH)
This zine is far too cut'n'paste for my liking and printing hand written interviews is going too far down the DIY route! Anyway, these 3 issues contain stuff on UK Subs, Subhumans, The Last Resort and Deadline amongst others. Daf

Beat Motel #2 / 52 Pages / A5 / Copied / £1.50 / 71, Rectory Road / Ipswich / Suffolk / IP2 8EQ
New zine here on it's second issue. Did not see the first one so I can't see how it has progressed (most zi
Beat Motel #3 / 40 Pages / A5 / Copied / £1.50 / 71, Rectory Road / Ipswich / Suffolk / IP2 8EQ
The next installment from this crew based in Ipswich. Smaller than last time featuring columns, reviews, Anti - Flag and Ginger Sling interviews, pieces on Queens Of The Stone Age and Groez Rock festival and a pretty interesting list of label and zine contacts (although Mass Movements was not in there. Grr). On a par with the last issue so I think this is one to watch and will probably mature over time. Pete

Last Hours #10 aka RANCID NEWS £1.50 (PO Box 382, 456-458 The Strand, London WC2R 0DZ)
www.rnzine.co.uk
My current UK favourite, becoming more and more the UK equivalent to MRR, this is packed with all the usual zine stuff – interviews, reviews and columns plus political writing and recipes etc. The highlight this time around is an interview with Gadgie and Waterintobeer. Always worth shelling out for. Daf

Last Hours #11 / 116 Pages / A4 / Printed / £1.50 / PO Box 382 / 456 - 458 The Strand / London / WC2R 0DZ
This has a label on the front saying that it was not Rancid-News but I know they changed name recently so I think I can safely say that this is what used to be Rancid-News. Glossy cover with news print inner with interviews covering Pennywise, Grabba Grabba Tape, G8 Medics, Satanic Surfers, New Winds, The Profit$, Darkest Hour, Against Me, Fighting Shit, Artcore fanzine / Four Letter Word, Among The Missing and Down And Outs. There's also features on Willy Wonka, G8 Summit report, New Orleans and Imperialism and Geldof. There are some unique DIY pieces with recipes and how to make a purse and a piece on how to put on a ladyfest (??????). Usual columns and reviews making this another solid issue of what is now known as Last Hours. Pete

Let's Pretend #3 / 60 Pages / A5 / Copied / £1 / 59 Canning Road / Croydon / Surrey / CR0 6QF
Got given this at a recent gig in Bristol by a charming young girl who when heard I was part of the MM crew insisted I had a copy of this zine for review. First thing that made me chuckle was the review of MM #18 where they actually counted how many music reviews we had in the zine. This zine was great I think as it had good interviews with No Comply, Bouncing Souls, Jets Vs Sharks, Pilger, The Mercury League, The Dwarves and Daniel Battams Fan Club(????) along with reviews and columns to break up the bands. Nice one and look forward to seeing the next issue. Pete

Let's Pretend #3 (Kate Collins, 59 Canning Road, Croydon, SurreyCR0 6QF) www.myspace.com/letsjustpretendfanzine
This zine is nicely designed (nothing innovative, just nice to look at) and is written with passion and enthusiasm. There are interviews with Pilger, Bouncing Souls and The Dwarves amongst others, reviews and opinions galore in the form of the endearingly named Baby Rants. I finished reading this zine feeling a little richer in spirit than before I started. It might do the same for you so you should buy it. Daf

Profane Existence #48 $5 (PO Box 8722, Minneapolis MN55408) www.profaneexistence.com
PE continues merrily along its soap-dodging, demonstrating, cider drinkin' path and while the music covered is not to my tastes it's always and engrossing and informative read. Daf

Punker Mentality #1 / 66 Pages / Copied / pmfanzine@hotmail.com
I can't see any details on the cover price or address details so I have put the printed e-mail address at the top for contact. First issue from these guys and you see some real effort into this to stop it from looking obviously like a first issue. Dropkick Murphys, The Junglists, Blowback, Action And Action, Smoke Like A Fish, Secular End, Do The Dog, Pickled Dick, Fruit Of The Doom, $up, Punktastic and Serafin some cool features (putting on a gig and graffiti as main ones plus all the usual columns and reviews sections. Worth a gander. Pete

Runnin' Feart #12 (Callum Masson, 12 Crusader Crescent, Stewarton, Ayrshire, Scotland KA3 3BL) cmasson@tinyworld.co.uk
I've reviewed this before and the immediate impression this time is that the interviews aren't so regimented. Other than that it's the same thing for the same people – Pistol Grip, Flogging Molly, Toxik Ephex etc. Daf

Waterintobeer #10 (Tim Livesey, 48 West Park Grove, Leeds LS82DY) waterintobeer@hotmail.com
This well established zine from Leeds has as much character and humour as any I can think of and this issue is more of the same – interviews, reviews, columns, tour reports, photos etc. It's a zine that's worth getting regardless of who's featured, which I'd say is a sign of quality. Daf

Zonked #8 – Photocopied & stapled / A4 / No cover price / Pete Craven, 46, Ashford Road, Brighton. BN1 6LJ / pete@zonked.fsnet.co.uk
Must say that I have not seen an issue of this for what must be ages. Zonked has always come up with some interesting issues with a few items of interest worth reading but not too sure about this issue. Interviews and stuff including Joey Shithead (DOA) interview, Steve Scanners exploits in New Zealand, a piece on someone's time in Toulouse, Adam and Jamie in North America last summer, Sunpower interview, Seein' Red tour diary and the usual reviews section to boot. Not bad really and is worth picking up but I feel I have seen better issues of this fanzine. Pete.

"I'm glad that you can forgive. I'm only hoping as time goes, you can forget"
-Brand New

Some tosser may have once publicly proclaimed that, "sorry seems to be the hardest word", but quite frankly, saying you're sorry is pretty damn easy. Meaning it, and getting some kind of fulfilling redemption from it, well, that's a whole other story. One with a potentially sinister side to it.

I guess that just like being sick will make you mentally evaluate the state of Britain's hospitals, it's only when you're panged with some considerable feelings of guilt that you're ever likely to seriously mull over the strange concept of 'forgiveness'. What it really means, and why the hell we all like to think we can get it so easily from people. And more importantly, why we need it so badly.

Forgiveness is certainly a weird one, it's a word we tend to band about fairly lightly, but it's actually something that we all truly crave at some point in our lives. It's a fundamental part of our physiological well-being. And it's not until you really feel like you need to be forgiven for something that you're ever really likely to have any real dealings with it. Well, unless you're the one being asked to forgive, but that's a whole other story. Let's stick with this angle, for now. What asking for forgiveness is about, I mean what it's really about, is looking for something (or someone, more to the point) to make us feel a bit better about the shitty things we've done. And that's pretty much it.

It's a big deal though, you know. A much bigger deal, in fact, than it sounds. Needing someone's forgiveness is essential to our mental equilibrium. Just in the same way that human beings are inclined to pair up (or 'group up', as Legs Akimbo said, 'hey, I'm not judging you') we often need someone else letting us know it's "ok" somewhere along the way. It's when you stop wanting at least some form of forgiveness (and effectively, a check-and-balance on your life), it's only then that you lose the ability to behave in a way that's congruent with others.

Of course, the problem comes when you can't be forgiven. Unrequited redemption if you will, but we all try our hardest not to recognise this. There must be infinite scenarios where this is the case, but we chose to try and bury the idea instead. I mean, you'll find so many songs about forgiveness and redemption, although, for some reason, you'll find most talk about, "I can forgive, but can't forget." So much that it's become a bit of lyrical cliché really. Loads of people have had a bash from Aretha Franklin to REM, hell even Tupac had a go. But the thing about that lyric/sentiment that always surprised me was the assumption that to forgive is easier than to forget. I mean, over time you can pretty much forget, or at least hide from the immediate consciousness, anything, but to truly forgive someone and let it go, I think this takes much more. Basically it comes down to the fact that we're just psychologically happier with the notion that someone can forgive you, but they might have to bring it up now and again every time you come home late from the pub, than any deep-seated resentment.

And as for the other movie and literary cliché of seeking forgiveness when your time is up in the vein hope that if there's any such thing as a next life (although I'm fairly certain the concept is much more about making sure people don't feel too cheated out of this one) and that whole Catholic guilt thing, well you can't get a more straightforward case of trying to cover your ass than that. Yeah, I realise I'm referring to fiction there, but I'm really talking about the motivation behind someone (some 'ones', and repeatedly) writing that, their exorcism, if you like.

So, if you haven't clocked yet, by my own earlier admission I can only be thinking about this so deeply out of a sense of guilt, right? And so, at this point you might be thinking that I've murdered someone, or have deep, dark secret that will somehow come back to haunt me like in a cheap thriller novel. Maybe I've wronged someone, stolen something, or brought down the system of a small country. No, dull as it is, I'm afraid not. Firstly, my life is not that exciting, and secondly I'm way too much of a coward. Although, In some ways it would be better if I had, not just for the literary worth of it, but also, most of those things offer some form of confirmatory forgiveness that conforms to an acceptable societal standard. You return the 'thing', you go to jail, hell you just say sorry to the person. But no, my guilt is comparatively small, and is only a betrayal of the certain standards you set yourself. So how does someone make you feel better about that? And why is it that, despite the fact I'm fully aware of it being a small thing, do I feel some goddamn bad? And the really weird thing is, that the thing I feel I need to be forgiven for, I would forgive of someone else in an instant. But I just can't forgive myself. Somehow I can't shake off that fundamental desire for someone else's redemption, as if somehow, only through a third party can I truly confess, and be given absolution. -It's at this point that I realise the intrinsic religious undertones of that language, and although it's not necessarily deliberate, it is acknowledged. Boy do they love their guilt. Whether you're religious or not (and for the record, I certainly am not) you can't help take for granted the notion that we live in a largely traditionally "Christian" country, and have subconsciously been brought up with these Euro-centric (slightly puritanical?) ideals. And why? You might wonder. Well, this is the key question, and it seems to me this is very much the point in all of this. The fact that we're all wandering around feeling so goddamn guilty, often about nothing, keeps us in line. In line for the confession booth, or the job centre. Doing what you're told.

And so maybe it is about other people's forgiveness, or the understanding of those close to us, that we should desperately seek. That's a good enough benchmark as any. Do to your fellow man as you your have him do to you, I guess, just choose the man carefully. Hold on, that' just sounds slightly gayer than it probably meant to, but you get the idea. (And, or course, do what you like, as I refer to Legs Akimbo, again).

One way or the other we feel like we're judged on our behaviour. And rightly so, otherwise what incentive have we got to truly do right by people. But how do you really do right by yourself? I guess if you want o be a better man you can't. Or, of course, just don't do it in the first place.

BLOOD

You know something? A lot of people talk a lot of shit about this band, but they make me laugh, and the tunes ain't half bad either…I can't even begin to count the number of road trips that one of their records has prevented from descending into tedium. Anyways, on a cold, wet night in Cardiff, Pete and myself met up with Jimmy Pop (JP) and Evil Jared (EJ) for a chat, shared some beers and a pack of smokes and had a fine old time. Oh, and for the record, Jimmy and Jared are two of the funniest, friendliest guys I've ever met…

Interview by Pete and Tim

MM: So, what exactly is the Bloodhound Gang and tell us something strange about…and wrong with your personalities...

JP: Well the Bloodhound Gang, we thought sounded pretty tough like the Wu Tang Clan and we used to hang out at his house (points to Evil Jared – EJ in this interview) and play his parties. He used to have these parties where it was uhh…

EJ: Five bands, five kegs, five dollars.

JP: Yeah five bands, five kegs, five dollars that was the idea, so we started playing his parties and when people started coming to see us we thought "Oh we should start doing something with this". So we formed The Bloodhound gang and the name comes from a children's TV show where these nerds would solve cases like the case of the missing bottle opener (we needed one so that sprung to mind) using math.

MM: Oh is that the one with the kids jumping up on a trampoline? Oh wait no that's the Red Hand Gang.
(nice one Tim)…

JP: And something wrong and strange about us?

EJ: Jim can pee in his own mouth.

JP: I can pee in my own mouth and he has haemorrhoids. And really bad ones

EJ: My haemorrhoids are so bad that if I'm lying in bed I can feel my pulse in them. (then urge to be sick, at this point, was overwhelming…Tim).

MM: You guys have been away for quite some time – so what the hell have you been up to?

JP: Well we were on tour for our last record for about 18

HOUND gang

months and by the end of it we hated each other so much because like… as EJ says some bands are friends then they go on tour and hate each other. We weren't even friends to start with (laughs). So we did that, then EJ went out on tour with Slayer, I put the Him records out in America. No one was putting their records out and we were friends with them Vikings, so we did that.

MM: They're fucking huge though ain't they?

JP: Yeah. So we made some good cash out of them (laughs). Pays for all the money Bloodhound Gang loses, so it sort of balances itself out. Our buddy has a show called Viva La Bam so we did that a lot and just shit like that.

MM: Don the salesman suit and tell us about the new album "Hefty Fine" - why should all the people out there fill their CD collection with it?

JP: I think everyone should download it for free and spend their money on the new Maiden and Depeche Mode records

EJ: Yeah but I reckon they should buy the new Ashley sisters album (laughs ensue).

JP: I wouldn't know. I'm never gonna get my chance to know if that's a good record.

EJ: I was kidding as it may be complete shit. I know ours is complete shit, so maybe that one has a chance.

MM: Tell us about the writing process? How do you think (if at all) it differs to it's predecessors, "Hooray For Boobies" and "One Fierce Beer Coaster"?

JP: Well we kind of make records that you're supposed to drink with your friends to. That's the purpose. I think you could probably interchange the songs around like, it's not like we've "progressed as artists" it's just new ideas we try to put down and then like some of the songs like our first single Foxtrot Uniform Charlie Kilo, EJ and I would e-mail each other back and forth with things like "what would be a funny word for a pussy?"(Laughs).

EJ: The only change now, is that we are trying to phase out the

DJ. Like when we started out there were only a couple of bands that had that DJ thing. There was us, House Of Pain and Sugar Ray.

JP: I wouldn't say House Of Pain because they were just DJ's so it was us and Sugar Ray.

EJ: Then Limp Bizkit came along and just ran that whole thing into the ground so we're like "Okay we're gonna distance ourselves from them as far as possible"

JP: And then, when it's so un-cool that even Fred Durst is like "Yo bands with DJ's is fucked up man" that's when we'll bring it back.

MM: The world of rock today. It rocks or sucks compared to say 10 years ago? Why?

JP: 10 years? Now 20 years ago you had "South Of Heaven", "Appetite For Destruction"… there was a lot of good stuff about. 10 years ago, you're looking at stuff like Screaming Trees right?

EJ: 10 years ago I think it was a little rough.

JP: I think I would have bought more records in 94 than… Oh the Weezer record came out in 94 and I liked that record.

EJ: Isn't that when Jesus Jones came out?

JP: Oh now we got problems. Soup Dragons.

EJ: Toad The Wet Sprocket.

MM: That's a pub name isn't it?
(We go on to discuss why that particular band sucked, and the whole ass-biscuit era and our "esteemed" Editor shares some, quite frankly, filthy, disgusting and hilarious stories revolving around the time he worked for Camp America with us – same time line.)

MM: You guys seem to focus on the comedic, particularly dick and fart jokes… Was this intentional or did things just pan out that way? How important do you think it is to maintain an element of comedy within the music business?

JP: Well I don't think any of us could be in a serious band. All we did was what we thought was funny; we just put that in the songs to make our friends laugh. Like when we were doing the five kegs shows at his house, if we made them enjoy themselves then we were on to something. So we just kind of stuck with that, you know?

EJ: Why write songs about your Girlfriend and about your pick up truck?

MM: I always found it strange how you got away with asking your mum for a better word for pussy. That was funny, but really wrong at the same time…

JP: Oh yeah that was wrong. She's still like "I don't remember getting a royalty check for that" (laughs). She still jerks me off about that.

MM: How does Jimmy Pop from the Bloodhound Gang differ from Jimmy outside of the band, if at all? Do any other members of the band have weird alter egos outside of the band

JP: You know what… the only problem is that we seem to have a lot of work to do. Like when you start drinking and writing songs you never expect to have to sit in front of a computer answering e-mails about the new single and artwork or bullshit like that, you know? But that's the only part that's kind of different than anything. Alter egos… I don't think so. Everyone's pretty much the same… Lupus is more of a scum-bag I guess, when we're on tour. As in a bag of scum

EJ: When he's home he pretends he's loyal to his wife and all that shit you know (laughs all round).

MM: Do you get many complaints about your material? Did you set out to offensive, or did is just flow that way in the grand scheme of things? What's the most bizarre complaint you've received (if any) from offended listeners?

JP: Again we didn't get into this to offend people. It was to make our friends laugh at what we thought was funny and we've had protestors about everything but they never protest like… you never get gay guys standing up there saying don't make fun of Jewish people. You know it's always gay guys saying don't make fun of gay people. And the most bizarre thing was, someone had a sign at one of our protests that said "Stop Gang Violence", because we're called the Bloodhound Gang. Like they must really be into protesting, heard there was something going on and be like "Bloodhound Gang… Stop Gang Violence" so what the hell is that?

MM: You wrote a song on this new album about Ralph Wiggum from the Simpsons, utilising some of his best quotes. What was it about Ralphie that inspired you?

JP: Well we all have our favourite Simpson characters.

EJ: Mine's Cletus.

JP: His is Cletus you know, The slack jawed local?

EJ: I also like Lenny, but Cletus is the guy.

JP: And if you go for someone everyone knows like Bart, then you're gonna end up with "Do The Bart Man" by Michael Jackson so I was always a big fan of Ralph because it was such nonsense. So that's why we went with him.

EJ: Lenny doesn't have enough quotes to make a song out of.

JP: And Grimey didn't have enough quotes. You know, Frank Grimes. (At this point, we're damn near wetting ourselves with laughter).

MM: "The Ballad Of Chasey Lain" from "Hooray For Boobies". Did you hear from Chasey? How did she react to your ode to her and your request for her to offer you the Gentlemen's entrance, and did she oblige you with the said goods? If not, how did rejection make you feel?

JP: Well, before we did the song we met her and we went out to a deli with her and Jared was friends with her manager… wait, was that before or did you meet her…?

EJ: I met her through Chasey.
JP: So, anyway she wasn't involved in the Tit Mans Pool Party 8.

EJ: No, no. She was.

JP: Okay, so EJ did this porn called Tit Mans Pool Party 8.

EJ: That was years after we met Chasey.

JP: You did Tit Mans in '98.

EJ: Yeah, but we went out there with her manager so…

JP: Okay, so when Chasey showed up, she must get airbrushed in all of her pictures because her arms are hairier than mine. She looked like Robin Williams and she was dumber than this table, and she was offended by us. She was a little bit nutty but it worked for the song and then after the song, on the record, Chasey like she recorded with us so… she was in to it

EJ: We gave her a script to read and she couldn't read it. I mean, she couldn't read English. We had to take what she had said, this incoherent babble, and take it word by word.

JP: You know pro tool it. Airbrush it just like her layouts.

MM: Does that mean that you guys get free porn then?

JP: Yeah, yeah. And you should see it because Jared… uh, a company that produces porn… it really doesn't matter because if you have label machines, replication devices you have all the production gear to make porn… So they always send us 80% straight porn and 20% gay porn. With the gay porn here's the latest one. (Jimmy shows us his latest acquisition). It's called "Smother The Sailor Boy".

MM: It's even autographed to The Bloodhound Gang!

JP: So, this is weird because not only are these guys blowing each other on a boat, but I think there's this whole asphyxiation thing going on…

EJ: Oh, like a whole Michael Hutchence… okay.

MM: That's not something I reckon we want to see...

JP: We're gonna watch it now. (Shouts to someone over the room) Lock the doors boys!
(It takes us all a few minutes to stop laughing before we can continue)

MM: Finish the following sentence – "Bloodhound Gang should rule the world because…"? Do you think you could run the U.S. better than old George W., what legislation would you pass in your time in office and what would your manifesto be?

JP: Uh, I think this one's all EJ's…

EJ: I would say Joey Deacon could run the U.S. better than George Bush. The guy is a complete retard.

JP: But you voted for him. The rest of us didn't. (Laughs)

EJ: Of course I voted for him. My president is Charlton Heston, president of the NRA. I do what old Chuck tells me to do (A discussion about old Chuck Heston's acting career follows, in particular, "The Ten Commandments" and whilst

EJ thinks that the casting was spot on, the rest of can't help discussing the bizarre way in which was cast…)

JP: I would also legalise lots of drugs. And there's a lot of shitty places in America so if something like Louisiana happened and it was Louisiana, why should we waste time cleaning that up? Just turn it into more water and put some sand in Alabama.

EJ: I'm actually working right now on the worlds first American franchise. It's gonna be called Americaland, and put somewhere in Europe like Luxembourg. I'm either gonna buy 200 acres of Belgium or I'll buy Luxembourg and knock it down and build Americaland on top of it. And everytime we need money, we'll declare war on Atlantic City. Everything will be legal there. We'll have American TV there with 800 channels as opposed to like 3 BBC's. We'll have American Wall Marts and home depots. All the best crap from America but none of that George Bush asshole shit.

MM: Are you taking applications for citizenship yet?

JP: I don't know. Can you get citizenship to Americaland?
EJ: Yeah, it's going to exist as an online country until we get enough money to build the real place (laughs). You'll be able to get a passport even though it doesn't have any physical land.

JP: Kind of like Sea Land? You know that guy that built the old um… they had the guard towers and the big oil rigs during World War 2 along the east coast of the UK. Some rich guy, some Sir blah blah blah took one and because it was outside of UK water, he started his own country. A friend of ours has been there, one of the guys who works with us and one time some Dutch pirates 10 years ago, tried to take it over and he held them captive and made them repaint the whole thing.

EJ: Do you know what you can do? And, I've even though about this. You can build an island out of garbage that would float about the seas and that would be your country and as long as you stay out of anyone's territorial waters, say outside of 12 miles of any other country, you are your own nation.

(We take a few moments to discuss the merits of starting your own Nation State and being supreme ruler – and of course the drawbacks. Of which there's absolutely none. All hail the Leader…)

MM: You guys have toured a fair bit, and having seen the world, what's suckiest place to play, the greatest place to play and the weirdest thing that has ever happened on tour?

JP: I would say the worst place to play is Russia. Moscow is like really dirty… they have some cute girls but you can get the same looking girls in the Czech Republic with air conditioning, right? And ice in you drinks. So yeah I would say Moscow is the worst. The best place I would say…

EJ: I'll say Phoenix Arizona. Hottest chicks in the world and totally easy.

JP: I was gonna say Reykjavik… Anywhere where there are good looking girls like Finland or any Scandinavian countries. Germans, except if their fathers own kebab shops, as those girls have moustaches. There are nice looking girls in Argentina… Barcelona or Spanish chicks.

EJ: Not Portuguese ones though. I don't know what's going on with them

JP: No, they all look like they've been shot out of a cannon.

MM: And the weirdest?

JP: I think Iceland because the day after the paper says that like 5% of the population was at the show. That's pretty weird.

EJ: I would say Lawrence, Kansas, because they would have bands there to play and they don't have any venues so we'd play like bingo halls.

JP: I remember when we played Estonia and they set up this press conference with like 20 people there and the news headline was like, "Americans Go To Estonia". We sat there for like 15 minutes and nobody asked any questions. We were laughing, not knowing what the hell was going on. So when we stopped for a smoke, I asked the guy "Why are they not asking any questions?" And he replied "Its Estonian modesty." What the hell does that mean? It's a press conference. It was pointless, but anyway..

MM: Who is the epitome of all that is evil and why? How

would you rectify this problem?

JP: I think that would have to be Ashley Simpson

EJ: I would say Kelly Clarkson

JP: I would bang Kelly Clarkson long before I bang… Ashley Simpson looks like a dude.

EJ: Oh, as opposed to Kelly Clarkson… Kelly Clarkson looks like a troll.

JP: Troll girl.

EJ: Kelly Clarkson looks like the thing on the Welsh flag. (Laughs).

JP: But I don't know if they are evil though, are they?

EJ: They're evil. They are everything that is wrong with America.

JP: Dick Cheney.

EJ: He's pretty evil. He's the puppet master.

JP: Okay we're gonna go for Ashley Simpson and Dick Cheney, but you know they've never been seen together, so maybe they're the same person.

MM: Celebrity death match. Who would face each other, what style of match and what would be their weapons of choice?

JP: You pick one, and I'll pick one

EJ: I'm gonna pick Stephen Hawking. (Laughs)

JP: And I'm going to pick… what's his weapon anyway

EJ: The only thing he really has is harsh language so…

JP: Okay and I'm going to go with Paris Hilton, and her weapon is her goat tits, but there's cream cheese in them. (Laughs)

EJ: (Impersonating Stephen Hawking) Mmm, Paris you have tits like a clam shell in a tube sock.

MM: What's left on this place called earth for Bloodhound Gang to achieve?

JP: I don't know what's left for us to achieve but (looks at

EJ) have you ever had sex with 3 girls?

EJ: No

JP: There you go.

EJ: Three is the magic number.

JP: So my goal is going to be to watch that video when he's done.

MM: So what's next for you guys?

JP: Well we tour for a while. We've been asked to do some TV shows but we can't think of anything good because we don't want to do reality shows. Enough of that already.

EJ: I don't think anyone is going to want to put us on TV. You're looking at 5 guys who are uglier than the entire cast of Doctor Who put together. I don't know who's going to watch that.

JP: And we don't even have scarves. (Laughs). So, looks like we don't have any plans then. Maybe sit around and smoke some more Marlboro's. Hopefully that will kill us.

MM: Last rites, the floor is yours…

JP: I guess since a load of English people probably don't speak a lot of Welsh, someone from Wales needs to make a load of T-Shirts with the most offensive sayings ever in Welsh. Imagine walking round with "English Cunt Smells Like Bangers And Mash" written on it in Welsh. How big would those shirts be?

EJ: I want to get enough booze and drugs to steal Charlotte Church away from that pretty boy rugby boyfriend of hers. Which I don't think would be that hard.

Want to know something strange? A Little life lesson? It's this…you never know who you're going to bump into online. One minute I'm there bashing away at the keyboard with my neanderthal mitts, and the next I'm "talking" to Shaun from Excel. Yeah, that's right THE Excel. One thing led to another, and an interview was set up, so without further ado, time to meet Shaun Ross…

Interview by Tim

excel

Shaun: Yo Tim, what's up this is Shaun from Excel.

MM: I guess we should start in the most convenient of places, the beginning. Tell us something peculiar about your personalities. What do you think defines you as individual?

Shaun: I'm pretty down for human rights and justice. Working hard. Being a fan, not in a band at the moment. Giving thanks.

MM: When and why did the first band get together?

Shaun: The original name for the band was Chaotic Noise, before I joined. They started in 1983. Dan and I met in 1979 in Marina skate park and then we met again at the Olympic Auditorium in '83. I was managing a band called SOS and I was doing a fanzine called Trer at the time and basically Chaotic Noise just evolve and then in '85 we changed the name, I joined the band and we became Excel.

MM: What originally inspired you guys as a band and have the things that inspire you changed since the band's inception, how have they changed and how do you think that they have changed?

Shaun: Initially in the early '80s we were just picking up their favourite bands. In west LA had a good scene and, us being us seeing like Sin 34, Against, bands like that, we were seeing them play and we thought, damn! we should just do it ourselves, you know? And we just basically just kept getting better and better at playing music as well as like, somehow we got equipment. As individuals we've changed immensely. We're approaching 40 but basically still down for the progression of hardcore.

MM: Time to give us a little Excel 101. That is a guided tour of Excel's history. How important do you think a band name is? Is there any significant meaning behind 'Excel'?

Shaun: Well we were like kinda stuck between the straight edge, the new school – new school to us was like Instead, Youth of Today – straight edge and being stoners. So we basically were just positive. More so like Corrosion of Conformity, Eye for an Eye. As far as the history: when we changed the name, that's when it went from straight punk, to having metal influences and that was based on – I accidently bought Trouble's first album when it came out and Dan and I accidentally stumbled across a Slayer show that was in a really obscure spot. It took, like two years before their first album came out and we were just thinking damn! This is the shape of things to come. But we were just coming from the punk side and I think that has a lot to do with these bands, with the bands we keep referring to from that era, whether you're from the punk side or whether you're just from the metal side coming to the punk side. As far as a band name, it's important it can sell records. The name alone in some cases can sell the music. For us, we were called Excel in '85 so there was no Microsoft program or Hyundai car so now it's like damn if you try to find us on the internet.

MM: So you guys are still playing out, right?

Shaun: No, Dan and I kept going until 1998. That's based on the fact that Adam and Greg left Excel to join infectious grooves in approximately 1992. Infectious grooves were able to pay, we weren't making any money. So basically therefore there was that... and they took our graffiti too which was kinda wack.

MM: Things have been quiet in the Excel camp for a while. I was wondering what happened to you guys and what have you been up to?

Shaun: Things have been quiet in the Excel camp yeah because we did our last shows until 1998 and now its 2005, since then I've been in other bands, Dan's in a band called Supervillian, Greg's in a band called Vega and Adam owns a studio in Los Angeles. So we're all doing stuff musically and I'm about to start doing something with Nick Oliveri. He's been one of my all time favourite bass players it's an honour, you know and we have someone special who I think's gonna step up for drums so that should be cool because I look forward to playing again, you know? How did the Excel today? Shit when I was fifteen I didn't work for P Diddy MTV "making the band". The Excel in the 80s we used to skate, do graffiti, play backyard parties, go see our favourite bands, go meet up with them and now it's like we could still pull off even better than what we did before but obviously doing something different and that would be two decades later.

MM: You guys were on the 'Welcome to Venice' comp. I'm curious about the original Venice scene as there were a lot of stories about Suicidal and the gang culture that followed and the violence that was ever present in the area. So cutting through all the hearsay, lies and bullshit; what was the Venice scene really like?

Shaun: Basically here you have it as far as I'm concerned. We were on 'Welcome to Venice' and it was recorded under the name Chaotic Noise and I didn't play bass on it. I was never down for the Venice scene. The first suicidal album is good and it has it's place in hardcore history and everything; but it was violence that ruined the early '80s scene and if you look at it, crossover is like the product of the almost overnight vanishing of the early '80s scene which was, like, Germs and into, more like hardcore scene like the Boston scene and what not. I mean for instance Crucifix, stuff like that. I mean 'Dehumanisation' is one of the most crossover albums, 'Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing' is one of the most crossover albums. But lets get back to Venice.. we weren't... I am adamantly opposed to like... it wasn't that it was exactly gang culture to was not correct gang culture and Excel was pretty alienated from them and we did our own thing but we were included on the compilation being from that vicinity. Basically, apart from Rick Clayton from No Mercy most of those guys used to give us hell because we were younger than everyone, number one and more like awkward and shit and we used to listen to different music and we just didn't chill there, we chilled in Hollywood and we were learning graffiti at the time. We weren't really skating because as I said I met Dan in a skate park in 1979 so I'd already got my skate on at a young age due to the fact that my dad started skating. As far as the Venice scene goes, I would consider it West LA hardcore. I think that the leading bands were against... even before Suicidal there was a band called Rim Pests, if you look at 'Repo Man' the hand drawn shirts don't say Suicidal they say Rim Pests. That's the reason. This guy Dave Casen, he came up with all of that kind of thing and you know if you look at Suicidal's history they kind of have a 'tendency' (ha ha) to follow other peoples' shit. Sorry about that Mike but so... I think of it more like a West LA hardcore scene. Entropy, even the Germs went to Uni High so like there it is. The Venice scene was really more like a skate thing and the music didn't really cross over except for the fact there was a skate shop on Lincoln called 'Streets of Venice' that Dan used to run and I used to run the warehouse at MMM at Dogtown where we ended up releasing the first album on that label.

MM: Do you think that where the band or a person comes from has any effect on their sound or how they evolve as an individual?

Shaun: I don't think it affected Excel, I think it affects every band. I mean if I could have sung, I would of. I guess when you write a riff it's like telling a story. That's how we used to look at it. A riff should have a correct beginning and a correct end. What happens in the middle it's got to take you to that end successfully and, I don't know, introverted so I felt that, playing bass I was my way of saying what Dan was saying. And I think you'll find that's how it goes with any band playing music that's trying to express feelings.

MM: Excel was part of the original cross-over scene and I wanted to concentrate on that for a while. Why do you think the crossover scene started when it did and what effect or long standing impact do you think that it had on both hardcore and metal?

Shaun: Basically crossover was the fact that we would catch bands like us; no let's take it away from us for second, bands that were catching the tail end of the early '80s scene in Hollywood or anywhere. I think things like Corrosion of Conformity, Eye For an Eye set it off with that blast being a legitimate progression of Black Flag but more melodic. Then I have to say that when the needle dropped on that Eye For an Eye record on the first song, after a four hour bus trip to go and get that shit for $4.82. We saw the shape of what was to come. Excel as a band, Adam and I we were raised by diverse music, especially a lot of '60s stuff, you know?

We'll get more into that, I assume, later.

MM: Conversely, why do you think the crossover movement seemed to die out almost overnight? Did it burn out or were there other circumstances that caused its, for all intents and purposes, untimely demise?

Shaun: You can watch it if you watch the videos over the era. It's like less and less punk kids were coming to hardcore shows and they just became crossover shows then they just became metal shows. And then headbangers ball were playing the stuff that was considered to be crossover metal with the exception of things like Cro Mags and the New York stuff. It was hard for us on that note because we were more of a band that were probably - I always pictured us as more aligned with New York hardcore, particularly with that, between that like '86 period and onwards. Basically that's how I see it happening the ending of the '80s punk. Some bands from the punk scene leaving, like, metal traces, so that when kids like us were searching we hear stuff like Trouble, Slayer and Corrosion of Conformity we were like 'we want to play that sort of hardcore and we want to make it interesting and we want to keep pushing the envelope' because that's when it just naturally disappeared. No not that it disappeared, it seemed to die overnight because the metal bands like Gothic Slam we'd play with them – all of a sudden we went from playing like Exploited, Blast RKL shows, and DRI was already ahead of all the punk bands as far as going metal. Then we started playing straight with Death, Dark Angel and then really until we started headlining we came back from all that and we had to pick who would open for us, and it was kinda wack because we were straight hardcore kids you know? I mean we listened to The Normal, we listened to Devo, I mean to us, Devo were a punk band – to Excel as a band – so when Anthrax ruined Public Enemy y'know.

MM: What do you remember most about the heyday of crossover?

Shaun: There was actually a brief period of time when it was fresh. There's even a picture, at Fenders bar of Death, Voivod, us, Cryptic Slaughter, Hirax and – damn, there was more people there – Possessed was there. It was out of control. I think it was at the Exploited, Blast, RKL show, for the reason that it was, if I remember correctly, one of the most violent nights at one of the most violent venues I've ever been to – that was in Fenders Bar in Long Beach. But there was something about that night, but that was like 1986 when everybody's first album was out. That was when it was the coolest. Because some people stuck with it, some people fell off y'know and what not.

MM: What was it like to be at the forefront of such an exciting and vibrant movement and is there anything that you miss about it?
Shaun: We had no idea. Actually for me, Discharge, Crucifix were the musical equivalent of Hiroshima to me is way more relevant than anything... you know those bands with messages you know like I think you've got Ludichrist down here. Of course stuff was inside songs but what isn't that like. First of all try to grow your own food and shit mentality – taking it to commune levels. It was more like, the riffs became more relevant than the message, if

you know what I mean. I miss the – well just turn on the radio you know? – Without naming names, like new metal? Whoever passed the torch over to those guys are just dropping it, falling short whether it's like lack of message or.. I don't know. I just haven't found too much new stuff out there to say it in an amicable fashion.

MM: Why do you think that none of the crossover bands: Excel, Crumbsuckers, Ludichrist, Beowulf, DRI, Wehrmacht, The Accused, Hirax etc seemed to reach the same dizzy heights of popularity as the straight metal bands: Slayer, Anthrax, Megadeath? Why did they get as popular as they did? Was it just the luck of the draw or something else?

Shaun: Well right then it was like, I'll go down the list: Crumbsuckers – stuck in the middle, not punk enough, not metal enough; Ludichrist – first album, too cool that's why we got Randy Burns to do ours, stuck in the middle not punk enough, not metal enough, but they're one of the bands that had a cool message but they threw humour into it or what not; Beowulf – was like West LA's version of Motorhead; DRI kept changing and they were almost like it seemed to get bigger and bigger in a way that we didn't consider true success; Wehrmacht was like an insane band that was kind of like a project. They came through once and then, but that was actually an important crossover act; The Accused, Hirax – Hirax were like metal guys coming from the punk side, Accused were coming from the metal side, then again when you're just establishing metal radio on college there was very little room for anything other than Slayer, Anthrax, Megadeath, Metal Church, fucking whatever metal shit that was somehow being thrown into the crossover bit. Some of it was an exception, you know like Trouble, that was dope.

MM: Taking the role of Devil's advocate, what do you think the lasting legacy of metal influence on the hardcore scene will be?

Shaun: I think that now that it's 2005, and 1985 was when it probably when it officially kicked off, although there were things, like I said before, that were preludes, it's 2005 and things go in a 20 year cycle so things like Destruction's End are the answer. There's nothing wrong with new metal, I mean, one point that I'd like to make, there was no radio like they have today for bands like us. I mean we had a press kit – cds weren't even out yet. Not that the Ozzfest and new metal's a bad thing, but everything's coming back around and it's kinda fresh to see the second generation doing their own thing as a result of the first time around or the second time around whatever you want to consider it.

MM: Should hardcore and metal have remained separate entities?
Shaun: They're just two different tones of music. Essentially in motive, yes, but in principle in that – everybody can play anything, you know? I mean in a lot of cases yeah, but in the name of world peace, no.

MM: Who were the best and worst bands you played with and why? Were there any bands that deserved to succeed and any that did succeed and shouldn't have?

Shaun: Alright, I'll start on a positive note with the best bands I've played with: I would have to say, Bad Brains, Blast, Ugly Americans, Justice League... Damn there's so many, I could think of bigger names: Adolescents, DI, Agent Orange – bands that we were lucky to catch the tail end of when they were still the original thing. Bands like, I don't know, I keep saying Blast. I'd like to say that we played a Bad Brains reunion show in 1995 and that was very special to Dan and I. It was the original line up and I'd like to say that it was a direct result of Excel's actions and that was pretty fresh. Other memorable show were us and the Gorilla Biscuits in Holland was a pretty fresh show because it was like – there was like a New York tension but it was like, they were like an LA version of us, not pushing that jock straight edge thing and they were like the tail end of the early '80s punk too so they had the right. And all these outspoken kids came out of Orange County suburbs, I assume on the East Coast I guess, and started calling everyone out on the way they lived their lives. To get back to the question.... I really didn't like playing with Testament – actually Dan jumped over our T-shirt booth where you sell your merchandise, at Fender's ballroom which we played at almost every other week to be like, he jumped over our T-shirt thing and knocked out their manager. Actually I'm a, like, anti war guy but it was kinda fresh because they deserved it. I don't like playing with bands that, like come out in speedo's at sound check and then.... whatever, it's all good. There's Testament, just a lot of bands that just had attitude backstage and tried to make us strike and shit, like, that's gay, y'know when you try to make like a local band strike – fuck that shit.

MM: And those you felt should and shouldn't have made it?

Shaun: I still wonder how Mike Muir makes music money. There's a group of Suicidal albums out but I just really haven't felt it since the first one. No offence Mike. Any of the metal bands, well they're just metal bands, they're doing there own thing. If you want to talk about bands like Korn, shit like that I think it speaks for itself... they're playing riff rock and forgetting about the riff. I'm not saying riff rock in a bad way because it used to be like battle of the bands, y'know? This whole thing's like, every question is relevant to every other question one of the special times we had in crossover was these trips we used to take up to San Francisco and we used to stay with this girl who had a metal fanzine up there; and it was like Cryptic Slaughter, Hirax, Attitude, we'd all go party after the shows. I gave Chuck from Death his first hit of acid and we played guitar all night, and he was like the ultimate riff dude to us to that was a highlight in my musical career. What was the question? Bands that I was surprised made it? I thought I was like COC, we played with them on Vote With a Bullet but now it's rad to see them come back with such a fresh album y'know? And me not kind of checking for them at the same time so I don't really know what they've been sounding like, well I do to an extent. I just don't really like to hate on anyone, y'know? As for anyone and any bands who should of got more popular? It was like, it wasn't the most accessible thing and when you mean popularity, street credibility was more important. We weren't dealing with major labels y'know? At the second stage they started distributing the independents.

MM: What's the strangest, craziest show that you've ever played? Do you want to say anything about it? What is the weirdest thing that has ever happened to Excel and what made it weird?

Shaun: There's so much shit because it was like 13 years. I'll just pick three or four things. Just the violence in the scene, stuff that's happened I've seen at hardcore shows was like straight uncalled for; people have died at our shows. I think maybe three people died at Excel shows and people are like 'why did we even play?' Fender's ballroom was fucking ill. There was an element of like, the idlest Samoan cryps, I mean they were close friends of mine, but like, kids who were scared to come check stuff in the first place were witnessing some of the worst gang violence I've even ever seen growing up in Los Angeles. On a good note, we were playing in Germany and in one of those little Diesel mini tour vans that they have in Europe and an eagle with a wingspan bigger than our bus crashed into the front window. And we actually drove through East Germany with a crushed in window, whilst our driver was inhaling that stuff that's like – it's like cologne but it's like 100% alcohol and you used to sniff it so like I'll try to send you photos of that because that was kinda nuts. We were driving through a storm and I went back to sleep because I knew I could die, it was kinda like one of those relax into death kinda things, like the crappiest flight you've been on kinda thing. This one time Dan called out this LA band in Hoover hall. It's basically harpies like the trollo gang, I figured the crips were down there. We got there for sound check in the afternoon – I think we were playing with Cryptic Slaughter and Wehrmacht – and we were there in the afternoon and a veterano, which means older dude, from a prominent L.A. cholo gang called "Harpies", whose name was Shady – it was on his neck- and it was hot because he was wearing the same mesh shirt that Sothira from Crucifix (80's peace punk attire) would wear, but gang members rock those too. This is the afternoon. He punches our drummers little Brother, both were from Highland Park which is another crazy neighbourhood – and this is the '80s too – he punches Greg our drummer's brother then Greg from Excel takes him straight down and then all these, about 20 harpies run up from the basketball courts and we were like fuck dude, we were just at sound check. Our equipment was all stuck inside, our van's gone, and we have our merchandise here. Anyway we make it til show time and then some East LA band were caught talking shit to us while we were playing and Dan's usually like 'you say something if someone's talking shit'. Basically we got in a fight with those guys, so at the end of the night we had harpies, east LA metaller and all these cryps looking for us, but none of these groups knew what they were looking for. So at the end of the night we managed to give all these crips t-shirts and actually get our stuff out of there while everyone was waiting for us to leave and shit, 'cos Harpies are hardcore.

MM: The '80s are often referred to as the golden age of both hardcore and metal. Is this really the case and why or why not?
Shaun: I don't really speak for metal so I'd have to say that the '80s were the golden age of hardcore and punk rock, and everything in between you've got amazing... like the Boston scene, Jerry's Kids, SSD control, that whole manic style – I don't even know how to explain it; New York style, LA style, there were a lot of bands in the early part but in the later part there weren't a lot. There was us, and there were a lot of bands but I guess, well, whatever. My point being that metal was just something that came and went like a VH1 show. The '80s are like, you can't take away punk rock and hardcore from the '80s, that's how I feel.

MM: Are there any bands which stand out in particular, and are there any modern bands that you think will be regarded with the same awe as some of the '80s bands like Black Flag,
Minor Threat, DRI etc.?

Shaun: I don't think there is because it has to do with, like, Hunter Thompson's dead, journalism, everything's so homogenised that there's no voice. Even back then, even more so in the '60s... we're here again, it's Vietnam and like, it's not like I'm doing anything about it except going to work and living hand to mouth. On that subject, maybe in electronica, maybe in things that are new... I don't think that anything new metal... there's two bands, three bands of modern times. I don't know. All I've gotta say is 108, Refused, as far as stuff that... the fact that Corrosion of Conformity still plays, the fact that Trouble's back, the fact that Discharge put out a record and Varukers did too, out of nowhere in 2002. If there is something like that out there please e-mail it to sross108@hotmail.com.

MM: What do you think are the most popular misconceptions about metal and hardcore?

Shaun: I don't know, the two are so unrelated. I mean they're unrelated due to intent, reasoning why you even picked up your instrument in the first place. I mean why you became a metal musician or why you wanted to join a hardcore band, y'know? Misconceptions...well that one band didn't write that Fear song that's for sure. Who was it that covered that Fear song? When metal bands start covering punk songs, it's great and all but, you know. Metal and hardcore it's like crossover. Like I said before, crossover was like those bands that caught the tail end of the early '80s thing. Then metal bands started copying our styles and we started checking theirs, or even sooner. Then it was when the needle dropped, the first time we heard side A of Eye for an Eye by Corrosion of Conformity it was pretty clear what was gonna
come next.

MM: Do you think that music is an effective medium for change, be it personal, social or political? And if not, how has music changed your life?

Shaun: Well that, how music changed my life, basically in the name of his imperial majesty Haile Selassi in a sense. Because look at what Rastafarians did in Jamaica that gang bangers couldn't do in Compton when 'Colors' came out, y'know. They united and made the best of their situation, found something to believe in and it was about truth justice and human rights. So of course music can…music, like Bad Brains, it's more the music but whether it's being done or not is a different story. Whether there's a platform to even operate like that anymore we'll have to see if something comes through that actually has something to say and manages to se heard. Music's changed my life like… basically the most meaningful thing in my life was I spent a year living with HR he introduced me to the movie 'Rockers' and was basically an elder to me, gave me a new reason to rock for life. As you're gonna rock, you're gonna rock for life anyway, you know what I mean? He gave me a new reason. That's how shit can change

MM: Is there anything that you'd still like to achieve with the band? What do you think you have achieved with them and is it important for a band to maintain a sense of humour?

Shaun: Yeah of course, I think that individuals need to keep a sense of humour. There was no room for humour on 'Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing'. There's a sense of humour on Ludichrist, the first Ludichrist album – "Hey waiter there's a god in my soup" so it's like same message, different messenger. There are still things I would like to achieve musically with the band eventually, but I'm more interested in being a fan at the moment. Nick Oliveri from the Dwarves did phone me yesterday to jam this week and I've been waiting for that call for a long time. Who knows? He gets it, I get it… and if we do, we'd be bringing something special to the person who's buying this magazine.

MM: How big a part of your life is and has Excel been? Do you have any regrets as far as the band is concerned and what do you guys do away from Excel?

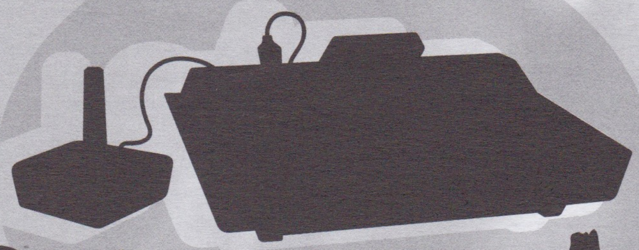
Shaun: Excel was our life as much as our graffiti crew and our friend network at the time when you could actually have that kind of friend network, or we were younger, you know what I'm saying? It's like back then you could have posses of friends rolling out and doing stupid shit and nobody would be like check, or now you'd end up in AA or some shit. Anyway, Excel was an important part of my life; of course because it was a priority from like '85 to '95 then we just kept playing for a couple more years. Regrets, no. I posted Excel on My Space and I give thanks. People post kind things and it's all good. I guess some people like it and that's all that matters y'know? Outside of Excel I practice Northern Shaolin Kung Fu, listen to music, work for P Diddy. Dan's in to BMXing he's got this skate shop on Melrose. Adam produces music. Greg's in the desert and he's in a pretty damn fucking heavy band.

MM: There's a couple of releases that are supposed to be in the pipeline, time to tell us all about them.

Shaun: Well we've already re-released 'The Joke's on you' a couple of years ago and we're about to re-release 'Seeking Refuge' our third album, which doesn't have the original lineup but still, for me, when Adam left the band the entire riff department fell into my hands, so it's cool, it's coming out again, it's gonna have a bunch of bonus tracks, it's gonna have the original packaging and a load of stuff pertaining to the concepts of the original packaging; like why we had Tony Albarn on the album prior to Fu Manchu. Anyway, so we're re-releasing 'Seeking Refuge' and for reasons I've said, what we were trying to do and the video – we're actually doing a DVD as well as the cd, with the band's history and our involvement with skate will be addressed there – that happened to be in the packaging for the re-released 'Seeking Refuge' originally. We're trying to find out who sings for JFA because he's the only one who called Fu Manchu out and Thrasher, which was fresh you know, because for us that's why music is wack because people do shit like that. So anyway, level vibes Fu Manchu.

MM: What's next for Excel?

Shaun: For us, re-releasing that stuff and hopefully putting out some new music. As far as I'm concerned, any new music that I put out or go forward with would be an extension of Excel. The rest of the guys: Dan's band is called Supervillain, Greg's band is called Vega and they're both on My Space.com. Adam's actually owns a studio, he used to be in a band called the Blondes, that were called the Eagle prior to that, he was in the Eels for a couple of years right after he left Infectious Grooves, there's My Head, it's an amazing album, it's Greg and Adam. At the same time, Dan and I did our own record so we were kinda battling, but was all good. If there's anything I'd like to add it would be to shout out to all the bands that haven't been mentioned in this interview that had like a big impact on us like Sacrilege UK, Septic Death, The FUs for showing up at our party even though the party was over. Everyone who put us up in Europe and everyone we met touring and continually support etc.. Vic from Inside Out - 108, Bad Brains, Ras Joseph – H.R., Mike Dean – Corrosion of Conformity, Crucifix…
Everyone and the Bands who we still listen too, played with and everyone who keeps hardcore progressive and alive.
Giving Thanks, Shaun. Maximum Respect. Peace.



GEORGE TABB

"Keeping Tabbs"

The Village People Are Punk Rock

One weekend, when I was around fifteen years old, I was hanging out with my Mom and step-dad, Nick, at their apartment, on West Fourth Street. With us were my little brothers, Lloyd and Seth. Lloyd was a year younger than me, making him around fourteen, and Seth a year younger than that.

The apartment, which was at basement level, was kind of tiny, but lots of fun. The room my brothers and I were staying in actually faced the street, so we could hear everything going on outside. Sneezes. Coughs. Even people having sex in stairwells. We used to like that a lot. Especially when they were of different sexes.

Anyway, this one morning we wake up to hear lots of talking, Village People music, and a very familiar voice booming over a megaphone. I open the bedroom window, and see many of people's feet. Shoes. Sneakers. Boots. And moccasins. With feathers attached to them. I told my brothers I was going outside to check out what was going on, and asked if they wanted to join me. Seth was busy watching cartoons, and ignored me totally, and Lloyd said "no", without even looking up from the copy of Playboy he was so into reading.

I walked outside, on to the street, and immediately heard the voice on the megaphone yell, "Cut, Cut!". I looked over and saw a woman in a director's chair, glaring right at me.

"You're The Bounty Lady," I said, stunned.

"And you, kid, are on my set," she replied.

Then some P.A. ran up to me, and hastily explained that Nancy Walker was filming a movie on my street, and would I please go back inside, or sit on my stoop, out of frame, with some of the actors who weren't being used in the scene.

I told him I'd sit on my stoop.

I made my way through a large crowd of people back to my parent's stoop at 243 West Fourth Street. As I got near it, and saw who was seated on the stairs, I almost fainted.

It was The Village People.

All of them.

The Cowboy, The Indian, The Construction Worker, The Army Guy, The Leather Guy, and The Cop.

"Hi," I said to them, in shock, "I live here!"

"Really?" said The Indian, "Well do you mind if we sit here?"

Shock. The Village People were asking me if they could sit on my stoop. Of course I was only 15, and they were probably just kidding around with me, but at the time I didn't or couldn't understand.

"Um," I blabbered, "Please. I love you guys. You are my favorite band, really!"

"I'm Felipe," said the Indian, "and this is Randy, the Cowboy."

I shook both of their hands, and I swear Randy winked at me.

I then sat on the stoop with my six heroes, and watched as Valerie Perrine and Steve Guttenburg tried to act their way out of paper bags for the film, "Can't Stop The Music", which also starred The Village People.

As I sat with the guys, in my "Keep on Truckin", R. Crumb t-shirt, and jeans, we talked between takes about the band, and me.

"What's your favorite song?" asked David, the construction worker.

I told them that I had every album they'd ever done, and I loved "Macho Man", and "In The Navy," but that "Hollywood" was my favorite, next to "My Roommate".

Felipe said it was nice to hear someone not say "YMCA".

The filming continued on and off for a while, and I asked the guys if I could go in and get my parents and brothers. That they'd love to meet The Village People. The guys all smiled at me, and said "sure".

I went inside, and told Lloyd and Seth that The Village People were outside our door. Seth, busy watching Scooby-Doo, didn't seem to care, and Lloyd asked if any chicks were around. I told him that in fact there was, Valerie Perrine, and that she had huge boobies. Before I could finish my sentence, he was out the door.

I then walked into my parents room and told them The Village People were outside.

"That's nice, George," said my mom, not believing a word I was saying.

"Really! The Cowboy, The Indian, The Construction Worker! All of them!"

"You tell great stories, George," said Nick, my step-dad.

"I'm not kidding. Come outside, meet them. You know they are my favorite band. My heroes!" I exclaimed.

And they did know they were my heroes. I had probably told them a million times. At twelve, and thirteen, my goal in life was to be one of The Village People. At fifteen, it hadn't changed. I wanted to be The Fireman. They didn't have one of those. Besides wearing the fireman hat, and jacket, I was thinking I could even have a large firehose.

I remember Nick once asking me if I understood the lyrics to the songs of my favorite band.

"Of course, stupid," I had said to him, "they are about being in the Navy, working out, and hanging out in San Francisco or Fire Island, and having insane roommates and going west."

Nick just looked at me, shook his head, and laughed. I remember my mom, at that time, telling Nick not to ruin it for me. When I asked what there was to ruin, she just giggled. I figured she was just smoking pot again, like she did in her hippie days.

"Come outside, Please!" I begged them. Finally, my mom threw on some shoes, and her and Nick followed me outside.

Sure enough, their jaws dropped when they saw all of The Village People sitting on our stoop.

They filmed a lot of the movie that day in my neighborhood, and through The Village People, I got to be an extra. The Village People introduced me to The Bounty Lady, who told me where to stand and when. Also, Lloyd and Seth got to be in the film as well. And Nick. But while my brothers and I are proud of it, he'll never admit to anything.

After the day was over, and it was time for everyone to leave, I got to hang out with Felipe a bit more. He was talking a lot with Valerie Perrine, whose dress was really low cut. In fact, Lloyd just stared at her breasts and drooled. I'm not kidding.

"Did you have a good day?" asked Felipe as we prepared to part ways.

I told him it was the best day of my life, and no one will ever believe I met The Village People. He laughed, shook my hand, and said good-bye. He ruled.

A few days later, in school, I told all my friends I had met The Village People. Chris, this asshole French kid, told me they sucked, who cared, and that they were "fags". I had no idea what he was talking about, and told him to "go fuck his dog, Kimmy." He spit at me. French people do that a lot.

That night, at home, I explained to my natural father, and stepmother, that Chris had called The Village People "fags", and what did that mean?

It meant it was time for a father-son conference in his study.

My dad told me that The Village People were gay, and if I didn't start going out for more sports, and take more responsibility around the house, I'd be gay too.

Being gay, if that's what The Village People were, sounded good me. Wearing costumes, singing songs, having fun, hey, count me in.

Years later, my cousin, Marc, explained to me what he thought the songs really meant. I was shocked, but not offended at all. In fact, I thought they were cooler than ever. I was more determined to be a member of the band than ever.

And now, years later, after having the ex-cowboy flirt with me at my old gym, and other close encounters with The Village People, I got to do a one-on-one with Felipe. The Indian. From The Village People. Still, after all these years, my favorite band. Next to The Ramones, of course.

This interview was supposed to take place many times, but kept getting postponed. For awhile there, I thought The Indian was blowing smoke-rings up my ass, but he finally did come through. And I'm glad he did. The Village People Rock!

What have you guys been doing lately?

Felipe: There's been a major Village People resurgence around the world for the last 10 years and for about 4 years here. We get everything late in the states. Like Madonna's new stuff was in Australia when we were there, weeks before it was released here. Anyway, The Village People resurgence that's been going on elsewhere is beginning to go strong here. The fashion, the music, the whole disco revival. So, we've been touring our behinds off. We literally have worked more now, in the last ten years, then we did the first time around. It's pretty scary. Outside of that, about a year ago, we decided to take a little time off, and went in the studio and recorded a couple of new songs. And then just kept on touring. You kind of lose it if you don't stay on top of things. We keep continuing the process of taking it all the way. Actually, tonight, we are getting together at one of the member's house's to work on a song we started working on last week. And we have a bunch of ideas for other songs. We record at my own studio, Tomahawk Studios.

It's like Do-It-Yourself, D.I.Y.!

Felipe: Yeah, and I'm happy about that. We are planning on doing another album, and right now pulling all the songs together. But it's like we get fucked up with the scheduling, and fucked up with going here and doing this, and getting fucked up performing at premieres, and television, and doing corporate shows all over the United States.

Corporate Shows?

Felipe: We have major clients. Like Toyota, Pepsi. We do huge corporate shows. Especially in Las Vegas. Huge corporate shows! In Vegas today, it's like Disney Land for adults, ya know? We are having a blast, but now we have to start scheduling ourselves, using this slow period because everything starts to pick up in about a month or so.

Do the Corporations treat you well?

Felipe: Oh God, are you kidding me? They treat us like royalty. These things are tremendously huge. We just did a show a month and a half ago for Gant, this huge clothing manufacturer, Magic Gant, at Caesar's Palace. In the Caesar's Palace Coliseum, with The Temptations, and Dick Clark hosting. There's a lot of money in that. Dick Clark does very well for himself.

Holy shit! You played Caesar's! Was he there?

Felipe: Um, errrr, we play great places all over the world. Every time we go back to Vegas, we play a different hotel. I mean, hey, we're getting closer to the MGM Grand!

Do the hotels hook you up with nice rooms, saunas, whirlpools, and deli-platters?

Felipe: Oh yeah. That's all taken care of.

Wow. And I'm playing punk. Doh. Okay, let's go through the current members. It's Eric as the biker, Alexander as the army guy, David as the construction worker, Jeff as the cowboy, Ray as the cop, and you, the Indian?

Felipe: Yup. That's right.

Awesome. How come you didn't win an Oscar for your great performance in "Can't Stop The Music?"

Felipe: How come what?

How come you didn't win an Oscar? As in the Academy Awards.

Felipe: You're not serious are you?

I am dead serious. You were the best in that film. A brilliant performance.

Felipe: I couldn't have won. That movie was a piece of shit. We hated the movie. They used us as pawns to spin their money-making greedy little, you know, I mean, I believe that if we had had more control over our careers back then like we do now, that movie would have never been made the way it was. We didn't need ten thousand people to be in the film for us. We probably would have made it a really fun road movie, with our friends in it with us, and with a couple of stars that the public would know, but our friends. It would have been a totally different movie. Totally.

Didn't The Bounty Lady direct it?

Felipe: Huh?

The Bounty Lady. Nancy Walker. You know, "The quicker-picker-upper!"

Felipe: She did a lousy job. She was difficult to work with. She wouldn't take ideas from us, stuff like that. I mean, who knows a group better than the group knows itself? Everything ended up on the cutting room floor. She is not a funny person like, um, Robin Williams. Or Whoppie Goldburg. They're funny funny. Nancy Walker is funny in a situation reacting to something else. There is a difference there, ya know? Her comic timing was different than most classic comics. You know, that movie killed us. It crucified us at the box office.

Really? I thought it was a real success. It totally ruled.

Felipe: Oh, George, you were too young to remember.

I mean, fucking Valerie Perrine, Steve Guttenburg, I mean, wow!

Felipe: Oh please, go away with that, you can have them! I mean, they are nice people, we still know them and say hello, but....well, we ran into Steve while doing "Regis & Kathy Lee", and he couldn't believe how fabulous we look.

You look marvelous!

So, how'd you end up being the Indian in the band?

Felipe: I didn't end up being the Indian, I was born one. My father is an American Indian. He's a quarter Suix. And my mother's Puerto Rican.

Oh. Okay, so, um, being part Indian, does that give you a big Tomahawk?

Felipe: Um, yeah, I would say so, yes.

Do you ever do rain-dances?

Felipe: Well, that's a make believe kind of thing. There are different dances for different kinds of ceremonies. For different things. Different purposes. There are different native cultural dances for each tribe. I don't know if a rain-dance is made up by, oh God, I really hate saying this, but made up by Hollywood movies, ya know?

So, being The Indian, do you and The Cowboy ever fight?

Felipe: No, no, no. Never. We get along great. Hey, you know, you are dropping the clichés on me.

I'm sorry. I'm just being silly. I love you guys. I really, really do!

Felipe: You are silly. A silly man!

Okay. What year did you guys form?

Felipe: Seventy-seven.

That's the year of Punk Rock! You are like the last of the original members.

Felipe: Yeah, I'd say that, but Ray was in the movie. There's Alex, David, and myself. Glen (original Leatherman) is retired from the road, but he is still involved with our corporation. He's still on a chair in the board of directors for our company. He does different projects from his house for us. He works on the website for us.

Who do you think your biggest fan base is today, like compared to twenty years ago?

Felipe: A lot of people like us. I just got a call from my friend Betsy, and her lawyer, that had done some work for her, wanted some pictures of us for his kids. We get that a lot now. Little kids.

I know the feeling well.

Felipe: You know, they want photos, the kids, they love us. I can't walk in my own neighborhood anymore because store merchants and people just constantly ask me for photos for them, or their cousins, or their nephews or their kids. So I drive to the grocery store. If I walk, I try to dodge people from here to there. It's difficult. In my neighborhood. But when I get into the city, I kind of blend in. You know?

But in your neighborhood, you are The Indian from The Village People!

Felipe: Oh yeah. Some woman walked up to me with her son on the street and said that her kid has something to say to me. The little boy looks up at me and says, "You used to be The Indian Man." And I'm like, yeah, I was, and still am!

Okay Felipe. Considering you are a couple of years older now, than in the early days, does it take longer to put your costume on?

Felipe: No. (laughs). No. It takes the same time. About an hour.

Okay, you guys were one of the first gay bands like, well, to make it huge. I mean, with the overtly gay lyrics and stuff...

Felipe: That's a really fine line to call. To get into. Okay, the thing is the group didn't start out as a gay band, but the producers designed the songs in tribute to the gay community, and we really didn't even perform in gay clubs. Well, hardly. Ever. The myth is that the group is a gay band but The Village People are really NOT a gay band.

So, is anybody in the band straight, then?

Felipe: That's one thing we don't get into. The personal business of each member. We tell people that that's "my business". But you know, I don't think it really even matters anymore. It was a myth. People say our lyrics and songs mean one thing, when you're saying another thing. We actually sat back one day to analyze the songs to ask one guy, who was an old manager of ours, who had told us there were themes in our songs. When we asked him to please give us an example, he said, "In The Navy. Signing up the seamen fast!" We said, you know, you're really ridiculous, if we would have sat back, or they, our managers, would have sat back, when they wrote the songs, to really come up with a hidden agenda underneath the songs, well, nobody was that clever in the beginning. The songs took on a life of their own.

Jaques Morali, your old manager, did a lot of that, right?

Felipe: He spun that. He was a spin doctor in there. He opened his big fat mouth talking about there's black and there's white and gay and there's straight, and all that. He should have really just kept quiet. It was no ones business. People are smart. They know when they see a group on stage, that's what they do. Perform. And that's what we do. We're a party band.

The best party songs ever!

Felipe: Yeah, but I'm just tired of people going, "Oh, you're a gay band." It's gotten to the point of like, "yeah, fine, if you say we are a gay band, then to you, we are." But to a teenage girl, or a friend's mother, or a little kid, we are not a gay band. To Corporate America, who are our biggest accounts, we're not a gay band.

In 1980, you guys put out "Renaissance". It was New Romantic/New Wave. New Costumes and everything. What were you thinking?

Felipe: After the movie, they crucified us, ya know, suddenly we weren't popular anymore. The radio was trying to get away from disco, and the industry was like, "they can't do anything else, they have to rely on their stupid costumes", so we turned around and did something else. And they didn't like that either!

That's the music business.

Felipe: Ya know, George, there is an old saying, "If it ain't broken, don't fix it."

So it wasn't your idea, then, to dress in those other costumes.

Felipe: It was and it wasn't.

Did you ever see The Saturday Night Live routine when they imitated you guys?

Felipe: Oh yeah, I see it every now and again when I show it to friends. It's hysterical, Bulushi imitating me.

That's quite an honor.

Hey, do you shave your chest or what?

Felipe: No, I don't have any hair on my body.

Fuck. I'm jealous. I wish I didn't. I got some hair on my chest that came in a couple of years ago, and it's ugly. And every time I shave my body hair I get stubble.

Felipe: You're silly. And funny. A funny man.

I'm serious.

Felipe: Uh-huh.

Okay, the song, "YMCA", did you ever think about doing "YHMA"? That's The Young Men's Hebrew Association. I think they feel left out.

Felipe: Um, no...man, you are lots of fun! (laughs)

I'm serious, again.

Felipe: Uh-huh. (laughs)

No, really, you don't understand, you are like my favorite band, ever. Next to The Ramones. But I was into you guys first. I swear!

Felipe: Oh my God. We'll have to send you a signed photo.

That'd make my life!

Felipe: Okay, then it's done!

Who do you think the sexiest woman alive is? Sexiest man?

Felipe: Wow, you caught me off guard. I thought Kim Bassinger looked pretty glamorous at The Oscars. Guys? Ben Affleck. I saw a spread he did in G.Q. He's a normal looking guy. Ya know, the guy who co-wrote "Good Will Hunting".

What about that Titanic Guy?

Felipe: Leonardo DiCaprio, yeah, but he's a kid though. I have lots of favorite singers too. In fact, I just pulled out a Judy Garland CD. What incredible singing that woman used to do.

Your management company just told me you may have a new movie coming out soon.

Felipe: We are kind of trying not to let that happen. It's their take on what they want to do. But it's not ours. There are now two different ideas on the table. They wanna do a trash movie, like "Boogie Nights". Real trash. It's really nasty. It is supposed to show the really dark side of the group. We don't wanna do that.

You should do an upbeat documentary.

Felipe: It's not what they wanna do, George. They wanna do something about what you do behind closed doors. With friends, after shows, stuff like that. It wouldn't be a movie about a group that'd you sit down and go, "Oh, this is fun!", they don't wanna make a movie about fun. And we're about having fun.

You sure as hell are. So, it sounds to me like you have the bad taste of the music industry in your mouth. That you're not in love with them.

Felipe: I'm not in love with the music industry, and you can quote me on that. A lot of these A&R people are full of shit, have no taste, and don't know a good band from a bad band. They only wanna deal with a good-looking young singer. Mostly women. They want to make millions of dollars off of her. Or garage bands they can exploit. But with groups like us, well....I had a conversation with an asshole from BMG who told us, "No, I can't really see you guys having out an album today. It would be hard for you guys to chart!" How the fuck does he know? Why doesn't he release something and find out!

They suck. They're stupid and dumb.

Felipe: That scares me. He's one guy, a major player in the music industry, talking like that, and you know that there are another nine assholes following him.

Fuck them. Fuckheads. I should fucking kick their ass.

Felipe: You know, I don't like anybody in the industry, they are all full of shit. The media is full of shit. They twist things around and screw it up. The best thing to do if you are in a band, is to really establish a great fan base, and do your own records. Do It Yourself. D.I.Y. like you said, George.

Okay! Punk Rock! If you were gonna have a tag team wrestling match with The Spice Girls, who'd win?

Felipe: It'd be like half and half. I'd say that Ginger Spice would win, and maybe Posh, and Scary. Then I'd say that the cop would win, the construction worker, and the Indian. I bet the policeman would be watching, just making goo-goo eyes at the girls. I like the Spice Girls. They may be the laughing stock of the industry, but they are laughing all the way to the bank. Good for them!

Okay, last question. If you are ever looking for "The Punk Rock" Village Person, can I audition? I'd do great. I know all your songs. My band even plays one of your tunes!

Felipe: Only if your hair were multi-colored, and you wore tuns of safety-pins. And you would have to be pierced, and have tattoos.

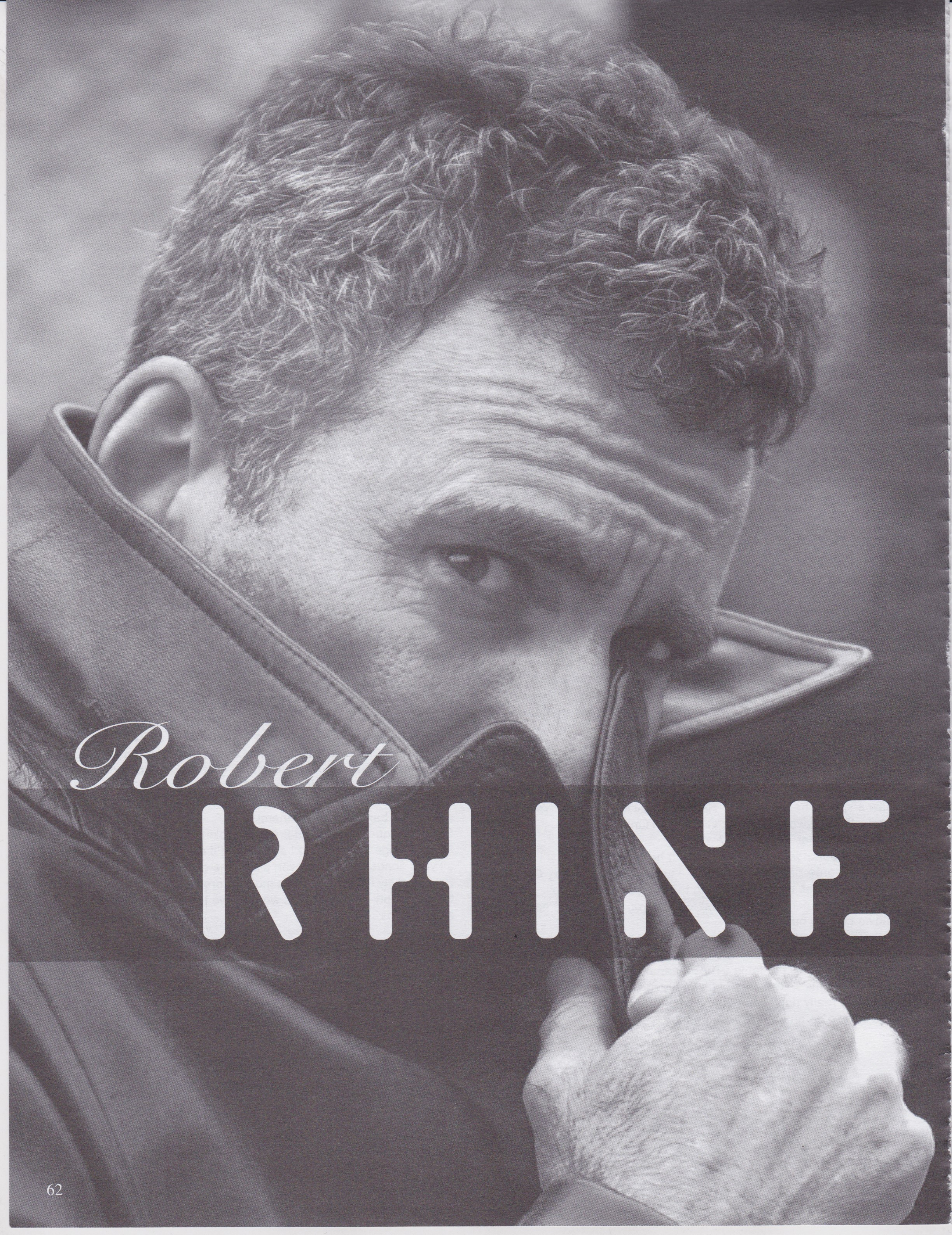
I'm afraid to get a tattoo.

Felipe: You don't have any tats? Get yourself some tats, man. I've got two. David's got two. No, three, actually.

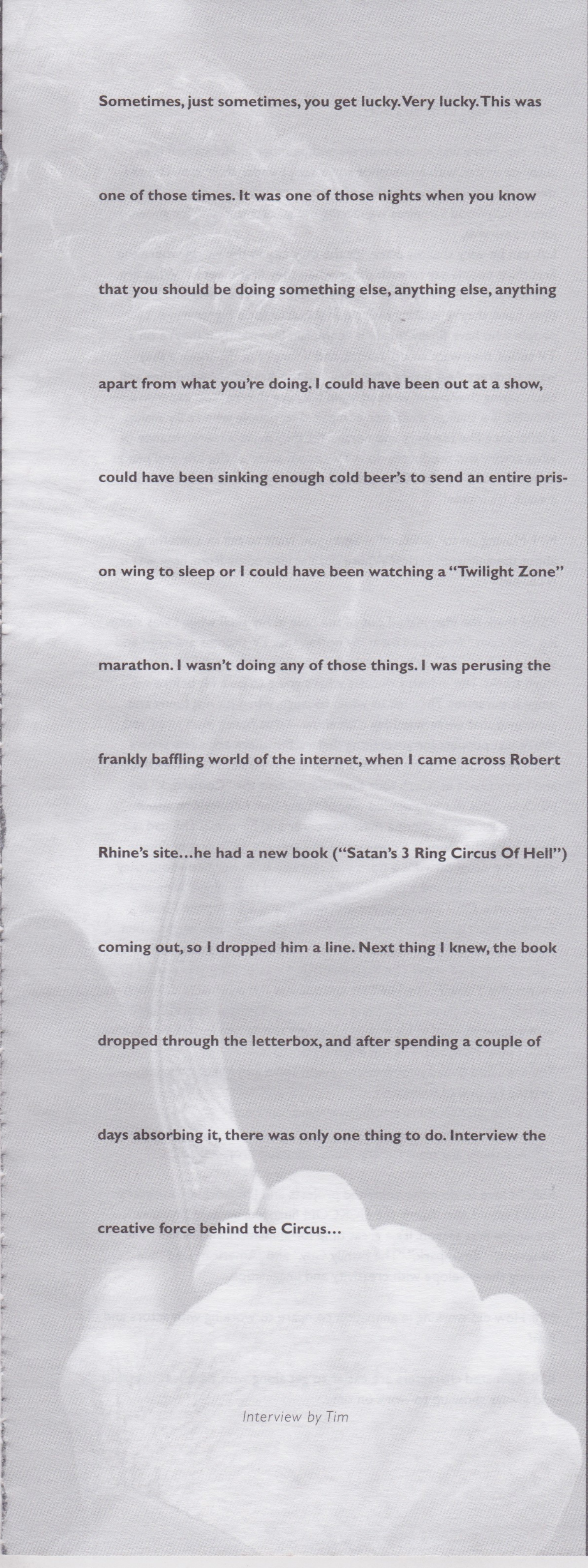
Doesn't it hurt?

Felipe: Hell yeah, but it's worth it. Come on George, be a Macho Man.

Do temporary tattoos count?



Robert RHINE



Sometimes, just sometimes, you get lucky. Very lucky. This was one of those times. It was one of those nights when you know that you should be doing something else, anything else, anything apart from what you're doing. I could have been out at a show, could have been sinking enough cold beer's to send an entire prison wing to sleep or I could have been watching a "Twilight Zone" marathon. I wasn't doing any of those things. I was perusing the frankly baffling world of the internet, when I came across Robert Rhine's site…he had a new book ("Satan's 3 Ring Circus Of Hell") coming out, so I dropped him a line. Next thing I knew, the book dropped through the letterbox, and after spending a couple of days absorbing it, there was only one thing to do. Interview the creative force behind the Circus…

Interview by Tim

MM: Time to draw back the veiled curtain…who is Robert Steven Rhine?

RSR: I don't know -- let me ask one of my other personalities. Actually, I'm not sure who I am and sometimes even where I am. When I was ten years old, I was nearly killed by a massive head injury that cracked open my skull like a coconut on concrete. I had sixty-four stitches crocheted into my scalp. Then, I went blind in one eye and wound up in the hospital for all of fourth grade. The doctors thought I had a brain tumor. This was back in the late-60's when doctors still smoked Lucky's in the hospital. Anyhow, I somehow survived my head injury and I still have blinding migraines to this day. You can still put you finger on the soft spot on my skull and touch my brain. That's why I titled my first book "My Brain Escapes Me" (Sun Dog Press).

MM: How do you see yourself, and how, if at all, do you think your vision, or image of R.S. Rhine differs from the way other people see and envision you? Which facet of your personality do you think is the REAL Robert Steven Rhine, and which facet of your personality do you see as being superfluous?

RSR: I'm a writer who walks the knife blade between humor and horror. I find these extremes stroll hand in hand. Sometimes, in my most tragic moments, I find humor. It's a sickness, I know. But life can be a horrible joke. Like, you work your ass off your whole life, so one day you won't have to -- but by then you're too old and tired to enjoy it. (Rim shot here). And then, you're suddenly on your death bed, and it doesn't matter how rich or powerful, or beautiful you were -- you still crap your pants -- and you barely get to enjoy all the money you sweated your entire life to earn before it's over. So, you pass on your nest egg to the next generation to be taxed again and again. I call this the 'death-cycle.' See, to me, life's a cosmic joke and we're the punch line. Reminds me of a aphorism I once wrote, "The disciple asked if comedy was the answer. God just laughed."

MM: Let's go back a bit, draw the curtain back a little more…you were an entertainment and film publicist in Hollyweird right? How did you become involved in that "film" industry? Is the film industry really the "den of depravity and iniquity" that common perception believes it to be?

RSR: Every time you draw back that curtain, I feel like I'm an attraction in a circus sideshow. Perfect. But yes, Hollyweird is an insane "den of depravity." Or, "pit of perversity." Everyone stumbles around Hollywood with knives shoved between their shoulder blades. The more knives in your back, the further you've made it. It's a brutal town, full of phonies, leaches, liars, con men, bull-shitters, back-stabbers and wannabes. If you're a really big star you're pissing on a whole lot of people to stay afloat. I grew up in it. Not the piss -- showbiz. My parents were in "the biz." They weren't big stars or anything, just hard working stiffs. My mother was an actress and my father a comedy writer. Being in showbiz is like being in a circus family. You do what you know and carry on the family tradition, like the Great Wallendas -- until one day it all comes crashing down.

MM: What made you want to quit?

RSR: Who said I want to quit? Showbiz may be insane but at least every day's an adventure. Satan's lurking on the corner of Hollywood and Vine he knows how to party. Besides, I could be working 9-5 selling sneakers. I did try the regular job thing but it's not my cup of poison. Anyhow, I think you mean, why did I quit my job as a film publicist? I can answer why in two words, "Double Team." I had worked for the major studios for over a decade running around the world catering to the whims of pampered stars. Basically, I promoted big budget films while on location. You have no idea what babies these stars, director and producers are and how everyone runs around powdering their asses. Why do we empower celebrities like royalty? What, their shit don't stink? So, I always preferred to hang out with the crew guys in the grip trucks, who drink and spit and smoke pot -- or the character actors who appreciated their good fortune to even have a gig. Anyhow, back to "Double Team." One day, my boss at Columbia/Tri-Star Pictures told me she had a movie for me as the unit publicist, on a picture shooting in Rome, Italy and Nice, France. I blurted, "I'll take it! When do we start?!" She replied, "Next week." So, with images of topless French girls on the sands of Cannes dancing around my brain, it never occurred to me to ask my boss who was starring in the movie, or why no other publicists were trying to get this plum European gig. Then... I found out. "Double-Team" was starring: Jean- Claude "Wam Bam" Van Damme, Mickey "The Face-lift" Rourke, and basketball-clown-haired freak Dennis Rodman. They should have called it "Triple-Teamed." It was the terrible trifecta of publicity hell. But...I went to Europe anyhow and did the movie, which ended my career as a unit publicist. Everything that could possibly go wrong on a film, did.

MM: How, if at all, did your experiences as a publicist influence or effect your writing or work?

RSR: Being a publicist didn't help my writing at all, except maybe writing bios, but the job helped me understand marketing and publicity. Also, I spent a lot of time on the set watching how movies are made -- and that was invaluable. I also helped to produce the behind-the scenes movies which I enjoyed, except for trying to herd celebrities.

MM: Sticking with the theme for a while…you've also made a couple of films --"Vinnie And Angela's Beauty Salon and Funeral Parlor" and "Road Lawyers And Other Briefs". You want to tell us something about them? Where did the ideas come from, and how did you go about making the movies?

RSR: "Road Lawyers" was a spoof on the Mad Max / Road Warrior movies, which I loved. My movie similarly takes place in the future, only it's about the last lawyer in the world, searching for the last client on the planet. Sort of a lawyers inheriting the earth prophecy. But instead of gasoline, Mild Milt (who I played ala Mad Max) searches for coffee to run his jet powered office chair -- while taunted by a brutal gang of roving law clerks, lawyers and secretaries led by a disbarred female ex-judge. The film was a blast to do and won a slew of awards. You can read more about it on my website: http://www.robertrhine.com/index.html
Next, I made, "Vinnie and Angela's Beauty Salon and Funeral Parlor" which came about when I met an actress who told me about these combination beauty salon and funeral parlor businesses in her home town of Road Island. I then came up with a hook, which was a true story that happened to me when my mother-in-law passed away and my wife and I met with the mortician. He asked my wife if she had a picture so they make her up to match what she had looked like. My wife tearfully handed the mortician a photo. On the way home, I turned to my wife and asked, "Which photo did you give him?" My wife replied, "The one with my mom and sister." I paused and asked, "Did you tell him which one was your mother?"

MM: What were the most difficult, and easiest aspects of making the movies?

RSR: There are no easy aspects of making movies -- it's like going to war. High budget films are a bit better, at least the food catering. For lower budgets, getting crews to work cheap is the most difficult. It's still all about the food. If you feed people well and don't abuse them, people will pitch in. So, when something clicks and the film comes together on screen and touches you -- it's miraculous. That's the only moment movie making is easy -- when the movie is in the theaters and it is doing well. But that's only if it comes in #1 at the box office -- because #2 means shit in Hollywood.

MM: Is it true, from your experiences in the film world, that everyone in Hollyweird and the surrounding areas wants to be, or is an actor? What made you want to be an actor?

RSR: Yep. Every waiter and waitress and plumber in Hollywood is an actor or writer, with a headshot and a script under their arm. The sad thing is that such a tiny fraction of them ever find work. So, you have all these Hollywood vampires wandering the streets thirsting for showbiz jobs to survive.
L.A. can be very shallow place. It's the only city in the world where the first thing people say to each other when they first meet is, "What are you working on?" Whenever you meet someone at a party and shake their hand, they're looking over your shoulder for a bigger name. Even people who have finally "made it" complain incessantly. If they're on a TV series, they want to do movies, and if they're in the movies they want to direct. And, finally, after they win the Academy Award they still bitch, saying they never worked again because they're "too expensive." Showbiz is a shallow existence compared to people who really make a difference like teachers and nurses. Yet they make a mere pittance of what actors and producers do. A TV sitcom actor at the low end makes about $20,000 - $40,000 a week and at the higher end makes a million... a week. It's insane!

MM: Moving on to "Sickcom" – again, you want to tell us something about the animated series? Where did the idea come from, how was it received?

RSR: I think the idea leaked out of the hole in my skull while I was sleeping. "Sickcom "developed from my notion that TV sitcoms are dead and should be buried. They're just mindless cookie cutter half-hours with laugh tracks. The industry decides what's going to be a hit before we judge it ourselves. They tell us when to laugh, when it's not funny, and announce that we're watching a hit show -- that hasn't even aired yet! We're just puppets for advertising dollars. But there are a few shows that I do like such as the British and American Versions of "The Office" and Larry David in "Curb Your Enthusiasm" also the "Comeback" on HBO. So... this is a longwinded way of saying that I decided to spoof sitcoms. Sickcom is about a mass murderer and his family. The dad is a serial killer, the mom is a dominatrix, the son is a meth-amphetimene dealer, the daughter runs a porn webcam site from her bathroom, they have a crack baby and a rabid show poodle and they all live happily in the suburbs. Oh, I almost forgot, the neighbor is a pedophile Priest. Sickcom also has an incessant laugh track, indicating huge laughs when nothing funny is happening (just like real sitcoms). It's a pretty sick and twisted animated show. The flash animation was brilliantly executed by my partner Frank Forte. The first episode has the mother (a dominatrix) discipling a sex client in the living room as her husband comes home with a severed head in his bowling bag. She scolds him for burying bodies again in the backyard -- as the laugh track roars.
The animated filmed pilot is touring with Spike and Mike's Sick and Twisted Festival of Animation.
Here's the SICKCOM site: http://www.sickcom.com/

MM: Are there any plans for any more animated projects?

RSR: I'd love to do more animated projects and I'm working on several ideas. I would also like to see SICKCOM financed, because I have written the entire first season. It's a great time for animation. Shows like "The Simpsons," "Southpark," "The Family Guy," and "American Dad" are pushing the envelope with creativity and imagination.

MM: How did working in animation compare to working with actors and film?

RSR: Animated characters are easier to get along with, have less demands and always show up to work on time.

MM: What made you want to be a writer? Was there any specific event in your life that you think pushed you toward the written word?

RSR: My father was a comedy writer. He wrote "All in The Family," and other top shows of the era. Now that was an amazing sitcom. But you couldn't get that show on today. Also, I think I write comedy because I grew up in a very crazy home environment, which also had a lot of stress. My father had bleeding ulcers and my actress mother was a tad North of high strung. But my father is definitely where my comedic sensibilities sprout. My pop Larry "thought crooked." Not in a criminal sense but he saw the world with an off-kilter slant. I think I inherited that.

MM: What do you think it was and is about the horror genre that drew you to it?

RSR: I have no idea. I don't even like most horror films -- because they're all about gore. Gore is easy. A great story is hard. I like movies with great stories and horror together, like: "Jaws," "Aliens," and "The Exorcist." Films which rivet us, and make us cling to our seats, terrifying us.

MM: Do you think the horror and humor make natural bedfellows? If so, why and if not, why not?

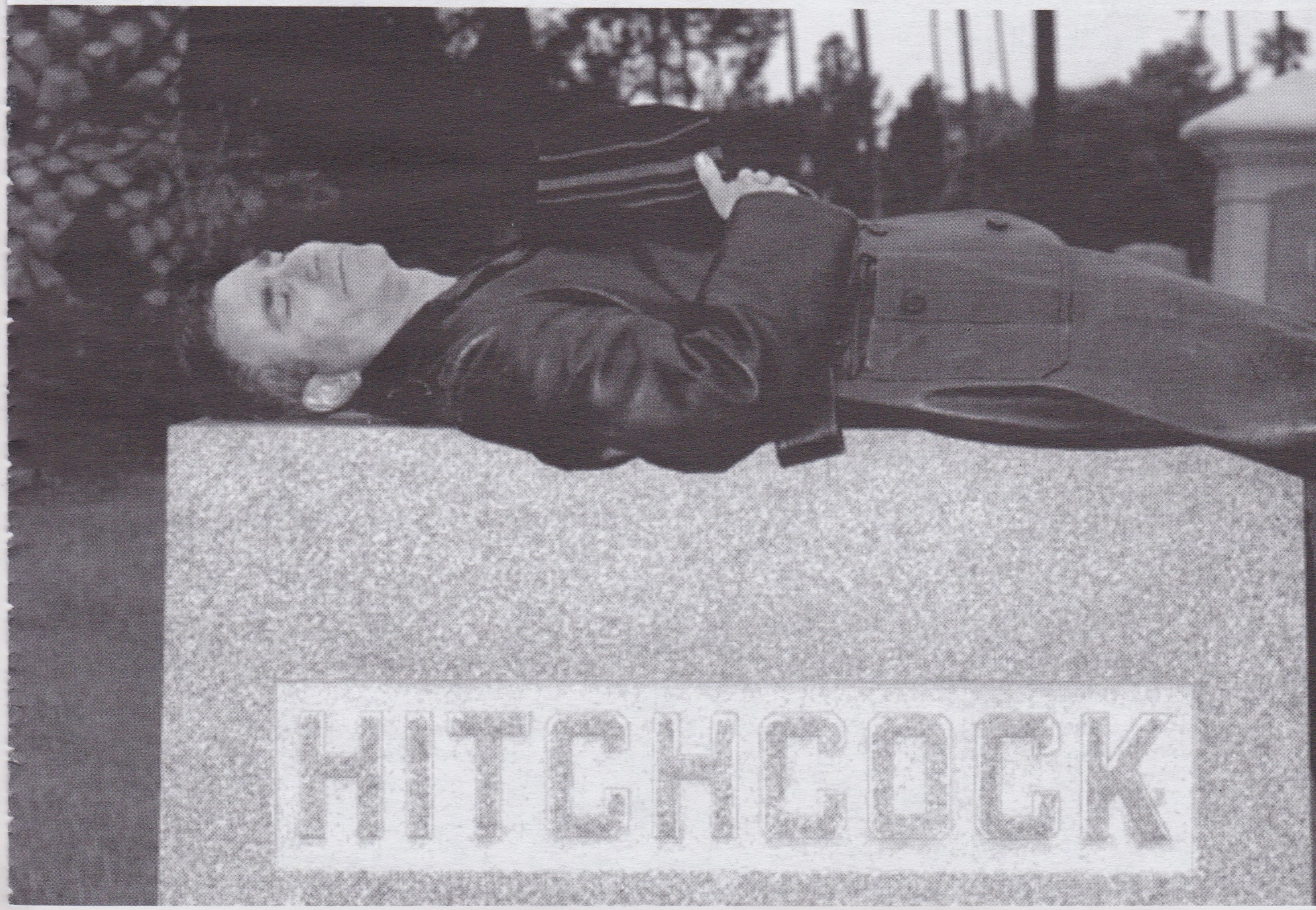
RSR: Absolutely. Both illicit strong emotions. Screaming and laughing. But if you can get an audience to do both you've really accomplished something. I know a producer who recently made an X-rated horror movie. If you can get someone turned on and terrified at the same time, that's the next frontier.

MM: Who and what influenced and influences your work?

RSR: Kurt Vonnegut, George Carlin, Hunter S. Thompson, Kahlil Gibran, Mark Twain, Monty Python, Ray Bradbury, Gahan Wilson, Charles Bukowski, Mad Magazine, SCTV, Stephen King, Alfred Hitchcock, Rod Serling, TV comedies like "Get Smart," and, of course, my father.

MM: How did you get your break in comics?

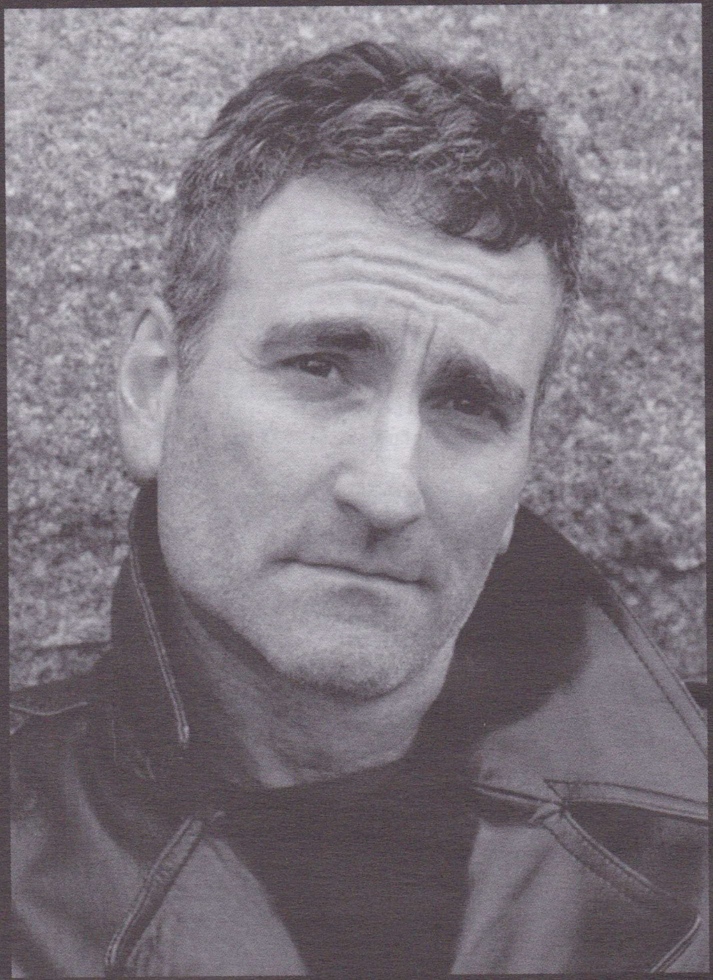
RSR: My first break came as a writer for Cracked Magazine. My dream, however, was to write for MAD Magazine. I even met with William M. Gaines in New York and showed him my stuff. But MAD was an extremely difficult market to crack. So... I wrote for Cracked for awhile. Years later, I was writing fiction for horror and literary magazines. One story I wrote, titled "My Brain Escapes Me," was about a guy who's mind battles his brain and eventually he saws open his head to release them both. A literary magazine called "Forbidden Lines" wanted to run my short story and hooked me up with Connecticut illustrator Frank Forte ("Vampire Verses"). When I saw Frank's artwork for that story it was exactly what I 'saw' in my head. He had my same slant for 'humorror.' I was soon working on some of Frank's comic books, like "Insidious Tales." Then, I convinced him to move to Los Angeles and we've worked together ever since. My first solo comic book was "Selected Readings From Satan's Powder Room," which I wrote and brought in three artists to illustrate, including the John Cassaday ("Planetary," "Captain America"). Frank did the cover and also illustrated one of the stories, a twist on vampires. My first year at Comic-Con we sold out of "Satan's Powder Room" and landed a positive review in Comic Buyers Guide. We were off to the races. Using Frank Forte's contacts with illustrators, I penned my next comic book "Chicken Soup For Satan," followed by "Satan Gone Wild." Each comic book was bigger and better than the previous. The Satan comic book trilogy sold extremely well and continues to receive positive reviews. This led to my 280 page color graphic novel, "Satan's 3-Ring Circus of Hell" featuring stories I wrote illustrated by forty-three of the top horror illustrators working today, such as: William Stout, Tim Vigil, John Cassaday, Hilary Barta, Steven R. Bissette, Alan M. Clark, Tone Rodriquez, Eric Pigors, Alex Pardee, Spain Rodrigues, Jim Smith, Vincent



Waller and, of course, my partner Frank Forte, amongst many other amazing artists. You can purchase the book here: http://www.robertrhine.com/id_circus.html or on Amazon.com

MM: How well do you think the medium is suited to Horror?

RSR: Perfectly. We've proven that comic books and horror still go together like peanut butter and coagulated blood. But I must pay homage to EC Comics, Tales of The Crypt, Vault of Horror, House of Mystery, Crypt of Fear, Weird Science and other early comic books who proved the success of horror comics way before I got on the scene. So, when these comic books disappeared in the 1980's, I missed them and decided to write my own. The producer of "Tales of The Crypt," Alan Bates, read my Satan comics and gave me two severed thumbs up and this quote for the back on my graphic novel, "Gross, putrid and downright offensive. Higher praise just doesn't exist. I really did enjoy the comic. Made me all warm and fuzzy inside -- kinda like how it felt doing The Crypt."



MM: What do you think that you can express through your work in comics, that you can't through the written word in the form of a novel?

RSR: You have to be extremely concise with comic books. There's no fat. Sometimes a story which will take a chapter to do in a novel takes a page in a comic book. You have to convey so much in so little space. Comic books teach writers to stick to the story. It is also, obviously, a very visual medium, which affects you differently than the written word by itself would. The images are interpreted for you, which can be both good and bad. But the blend can be a very cool experience for the reader. I'm happy to see that schools are finally allowing comic books into their reading curriculum. For many kids it's their first enjoyable reading experience and it makes them want to read more. When I was growing up, my parents would throw out my comic books. Some of those comic books appreciated more than their stocks. Today, when a kid comes to my table at comic convention, I tell them that their parents will "hate my comic books." It never fails to get them to buy it.

MM: Why do you think comics (certain title and publishers anyway) inspire devotion and fanaticism in their readers?

RSR: They allow us a pocketsize form of escape and they're extremely creative fantasy soap operas. Perhaps that explains the fervor of the fan loyalty. As an exhibitor at Comic-Con for the last four years, I'm still amazed as I gaze out my hotel window at 100,000 fans dressed in freakish sci-fi and horror costumes, lined up around the block waiting to get into the convention. This kind of fan base loyalty is awe-inspiring. The downside is that the film studios and production companies have finally caught on and realized they needed a larger presence at these cons so they're squeezing out the little indie guys. During Comic-Con, the studios bring in major stars and film directors and give sneak previous of their movies. They pull twenty thousand people at a time out of the convention to their screenings and star signings. Where does that leave the independent publisher who has a small table and a comic book or two? What will happen is that these comic book conventions will become more and more corporate. That's why there are so many movie sequels. So, where will the next Stan Lee or Jack Kirby come from if they can't even get started?

MM: Again, moving on folks…the link between your comic work. Why Satan? Why did you choose the Fallen Angel as your literal figurehead? Has your choice of Lucifer for top billing caused any problems, or opened any doors for the books?

RSR: I don't believe in Satan or Heaven and Hell. I also don't believe in Santa Claws or the Easter bunny. But if I did, I would like Satan. Don't get me wrong, I don't endorse evil. But I think there is a capacity for both good and evil in us all. But I certainly wouldn't call myself a Satanist or describe my comic books as Satanic. Satan to me represents that part of ourselves that society is always trying to suppress. The spontaneous, extremely creative, highly adventurous side, which defies convention and conformity. Organized religion beseeches us that we're being evil and we're going to go to hell if we step out of line. A single file, predictable, dull, safe line. They used to burn people at the stake who stepped out of line and indulged their creative urges. Society once labeled Edgar Allen Poe the devil and burned Mark Twain's books. They had new ideas and unique creative voices which scared society.

MM: Focusing on Old Nick, how do you view the whole notion of religion, and the concepts of good and evil? Flip sides of the same coin separated by morality of something entirely different?

RSR: Society wants to keep us in a neat line marching to "heaven." No muss no fuss. I call these "The Sheep People." Have you ever been on the highway and there's an open lane, which no one is driving in -- so you don't either? But if you take a risk and drive into that lane you'll often discover that it's completely open and clear sailing ahead. Then, as soon as you go in it, others follow like sheep. Society must keep us in line because creativity is chaos. So, Satan was created as a way to force us to conform -- a way for religion to admonish us that we've been bad and will be punished on 'hell.' But who is organized religion to teach us morality? 'Ye who casts the first stone' I always say. Organized religion is responsible for more death, suffering, rip-offs, molestation and mayhem than they've ever tried to shelter us from. Yet they love to herd us into large, cold, stone buildings with mile high ceilings to chant, as one: "Conformity... conformity... conformity."

MM: Is there more to existence than mortality? Is death really the end?

RSR: I think we are already dead and we are living in a flashback from our deathbed.

MM: "Satan's 3 Ring Circus Of Hell" – the book has an almost retro feel in the way the stories / episodes are written and committed to paper, was this something that you deliberately set out to achieve, if so, why?

RSR: I didn't set out to be retro. But if retro means that these stories are reminiscent of the older EC comics and Tales of The Crypt, I'll take that as a compliment.

MM: Given that the concept of the Horror anthology (especially within the field of comics / graphic novels) has almost died out, why did you want to breathe new life into this genre?

RSR: Because I dug them so much as a kid and I think that tradition should live on. Rob Zombie got a hold of my comic books at Comic-Con and then he started doing horror anthologies as did my friend Steven Niles. But there's room for all of us and more. This is only the beginning of the resurgence.

MM: How difficult it was to track down 43 separate artists, and put the book together?

RSR: It was a living hell. I told all the artists that the deadline was six months before the actual deadline and I still had artists delivering their final artwork at the last minute. I had artists from all over the world sending me pages: Croatia, Argentina, Russia and a wonderful artist I discovered in England, Alastair Fell, who landed the first page in "Satan's 3-Rng Circus of Hell," of a devil girl flipping us off. It took four years to finally complete the graphic novel.

MM: How did you know which story to send to each artist, and why did you choose the artists that you did?

RSR: I familiarized myself with each artist's work and seeing which style and story I felt fit them best. For example, I tried to hire Alan M. Clark, who illustrated several of Stephen King's book covers, and he said 'no' to me a dozen times. Then, I noticed on his website that he liked to do strange clowns. So, I came up with an idea that became Sideshow Surgery -- where a man is being surgically turned into a two-headed sideshow freak by a team of clown surgeons.

MM: I get the feeling that some of the characters in "Satan's 3 Ring Of Circus Of hell" are going to be popping up again in the future – do you have any plans for any of them that you'd care to share with us?

RSR: I have many ideas regarding the further adventures of Satan and his devilish consort. But I want to write fiction for awhile, and then revisit Satan. I also have several other comic book projects on the back burners and, of course, the success of my Girls and Corpses Magazine has demanded my attention.

MM: Now that the book's finally out there, how do you feel about it? How has it been received so far? Another volume perhaps…?

RSR: I'm very proud of the work that I and all the artists did for "Satan's 3-Ring Circus of Hell." The book has been received very well. We've gotten some killer reviews and a large order from Diamond Comics. Here's the book's promo site, run by Feo Amante, who has one of the most successful horror sites on the web:
http://3ring.feoamante.net/

MM: "Girls And Corpses" –- time to spill the beans about it Mr. Rhine, and tell us what you can.

RSR: Girls... Corpses. What could be a better combination? The magazine I describe as Maxim Magazine meets Mad Magazine meets "Dawn of The Dead." I came up with the idea at Comic-Con. I used to have corpses in my booth supplied by Kevin Klemm, of The Ed Gein Collection. Girls passing by the booth kept wanting to have their pictures taken with the corpses and, I thought "What's up with these girls and corpses?" An idea was hatched. So, I set up a photo session with these twin blond models from The Lingerie Bowl, Cassie and Maile Moore, and brought in a terrific fashion photographer, and friend, Lon Cassler Bixby, to shoot the models. The results can be seen at: http://www.girlsandcorpses.com/ The site took off from the start and we've now had over a million unique visitors. We are also featured in Maxim, Penthouse, FHM, CKM., Bizarre (UK) and many others. I am working on the second issue and it will be even more outrageous than the first.

MM: Okay, do you want to tell us, in your own words, what links Robert Rhine and Rod Serling…? How did you become involved in the project?

RSR: I met "Twilight Zone" writer Rod Serling as a kid. My parents used to travel to Palm Springs each year and meet with other writers there. I used to play football with Rod. Then, twenty years later, I wound up portraying him on The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror Ride and Disney World Orlando, Florida. Here's an interview I did about playing Rod Serling for Disney: http://www.wdwmagic.com/tower_robertrhine_interview.htm

MM: Which of your stories / comics etc. do you think best epitomizes R.S. Rhine and why?

RSR: Probably "My Brain Escapes Me" and my book of the same title, because of the head injury I suffered as a kid.

MM: What, in your opinion, have been the highlights and the lowest points of your career so far? Why?

RSR: There have been many highs and lows. Having my first book published "My Brain Escapes Me" was a great feeling as was seeing my films completed and getting recognition. I think the lowest points are when you taken advantage of in "the business." (i.e. having your ideas ripped off).

MM: What, again in your opinion, is the STRANGEST thing that has ever happened to you and why is it thus?

RSR: There have been too many strange things. But one pops to mind which just happened to me recently. I do ride-along's with the Los Angeles Police. I know a cop a seventeen year Sergeant and he lets me ride with him (as a writer) as he patrols L.A. from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. You think Hollyweird is strange during the day? -- try the middle of the night. That's when the roaches come out to play. Anyhow, my ride-along's started as a way to research a cop character I wrote about -- an ex-Cop named "Raoul." But then I got to liking all the crazy ass weird shit I'd see at night. One night, I'm driving with the cop and he gets a call, around midnight, about a 'screaming woman.' So, we race over and we're the first ones on-scene, with the paramedics. I see this girl, mid-20's, screaming her lungs out on the steps of her apartment. That's when we hear over the radio, "DB" (dead body). When we go up to the apartment, where the paramedics are hovering, we see this dead body on the floor, all bloated and blue, choked to death with a bicycle chain. But that's not the weird part. The dead victim has a large wide screen TV, which is right behind his carcass, and it's tuned to XXX porn. But that's still not the weird part. I mean, this poor shlub's life was snubbed out, murdered while watching porn, what a way to go. Just then, the cop nudges me with his elbow, grins, and gestures towards the porn. That's the weird part. But that's how cops are. They have to be numb to see what they do see every freakin' night on the seedy streets of La-La Land.

MM: If you could ask the Prince of Hell one question, what would it be?

RSR: Do you take credit cards?

MM: What's next for Robert Steven Rhine?

RSR: I'm thinking of having my head removed and replacing it with Martha Stewart's. Actually, I have no idea what's next. Life for me is a literary leap. Though, the voices in my head tell me a movie's in my future. We'll see. I just hope the catering's decent.

MM: If there's anything that you'd like to add, it's time… The midnight bell is chiming…

RSR: Don't think too much. Caught you.

Short R.S. Rhine bio

R.S. Rhine is the author of SATAN's 3-RING CIRCUS OF HELL (Asylum Press) and MY BRAIN ESCAPES ME (Sun Dog Press). He has sold his dark and humorous fiction to over a hundred magazines and anthologies. including "DARK DELICACIES" (Carroll & Graf), alongside Ray Bradbury and Clive Barker. R.S. Rhine won first prize in the 2005 WORLD HORROR CON DARK FICTION CONTEST for his story "PROPELLER BOY." Rhine is also the writer of the comic books: SATAN GONE WILD, CHICKEN SOUP FOR SATAN and SELECTED READINGS FROM SATAN'S POWDER ROOM (Asylum Press). As a filmmaker, R.S. Rhine wrote, directed and produced the multi-award winning "ROAD LAWYERS" (AIP), "VINNIE AND ANGELA's BEAUTY SALON & FUNERAL PARLOR" (Whacked Prods.) and SICKCOM (FrankenRhine Productions), which toured with SPIKE and MIKE's SICK and TWISTED FESTIVAL OF ANIMATION and is on their DVD. He worked for a decade as a senior unit publicist, covering films around the globe, for Columbia/Tri-Star, Universal Studios, Dreamworks and others. R.S. Rhine is a member of The World Horror Association of America.
R.S. Rhine can be reached through his website: http://www.robertrhine.com/

Or: info@girlsandcorpses.com

Or, Rhine's message board at :http://horrorworld.org/vweb/bulletin/bb/viewforum.php?f=56

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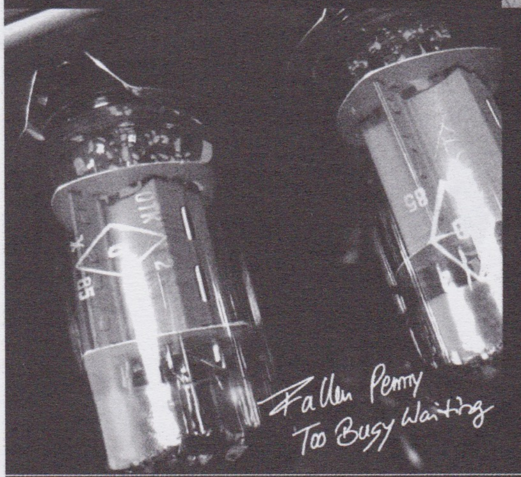

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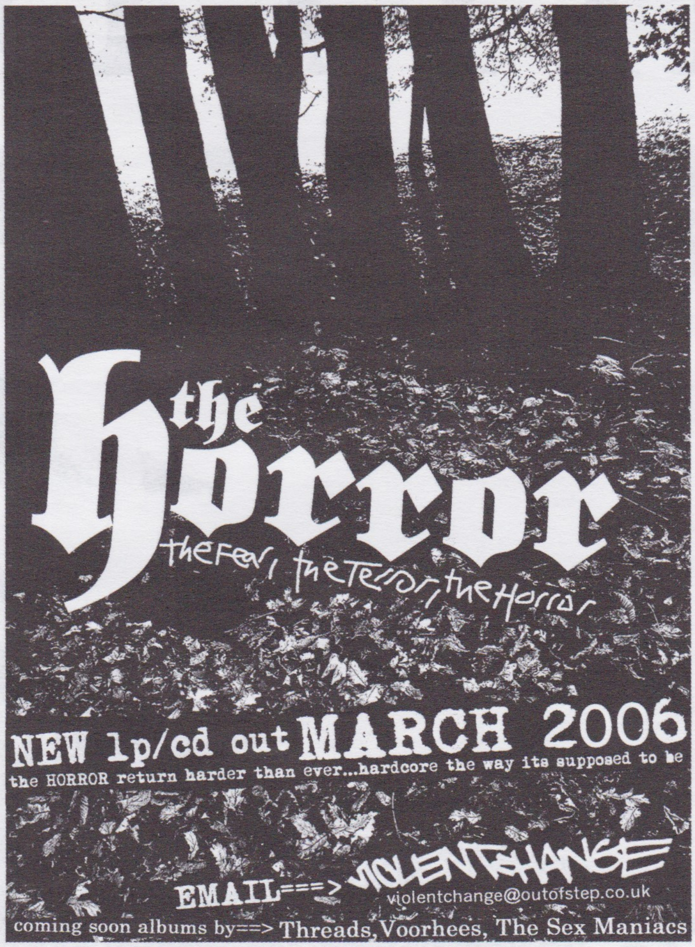

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The first time you hear The Haunted from Sweden, you think metal. The way their massive guitars and drums crush your cranium on albums like "eVOLVEr" and "One Kill Wonder". Even the lyrics although socially aware, don't dispel that opinion. When we met singer Peter Dolving just before a show in the Netherlands, however, that image was turned upside down. How much more punk can you get? Independent, intelligent, politically left of the spectrum. Their music and independence of spirit speaks volumes…

Interview by Martijn and Ivor Tellings

MM: We seem to be in the middle of an eighties metal revival... do you feel The Haunted are connected to these bands or have been helped by this revival?

Pete: Well, after 9 weeks of touring all over Europe, we feel like we have lost all connection to everything.

MM: Do you feel exhausted?

Pete: Not exhausted, but disconnected to everything going on outside of The Haunted. But to get back to your question. No, it doesn't feel like we are part of this wave of bands. Thing is, ever since we started this band people have been talking about that connection to the 80's. Sure, bands like Exodus and Testament inspired us, but we are not trying to BE that. If you understand the difference between both. We are NOT trying to help or be part of some scene. We're just trying to be the Haunted, and the Haunted happens to play this kind of music. After Four CD's and one live DVD I feel like (Peter looks stern and answers slowly), We should lay this topic to rest.

MM: But at the time you started the band the thrash sound was at an all time low, and now it's back, it might be an advantage…

Pete: Might be, I really don't know. We have always used different stuff, more melodies, but we also used more death metal influences on the second album and then went back to the more melodic stuff we are doing today. But have we had an advantage of the revival? Eh… I guess a bunch of other bands have had the advantage of it. I hear that we have influenced a lot of other bands, they use sound and song writing aspects we used on our previous records. The same way I hear that we have been influenced by other bands. It's always weird hearing other bands say that thrash bands like the Haunted influence them. In the end the old metal stuff is just something that is part of us. We were little kids at the time and loved everything that came about from, and out of it.

MM: You mentioned you've heard these questions a lot, but maybe it's to do with people trying to label any sound a band might have…

Pete: I think people always want to be successful. And if something gains a lot of attention, everyone will run in that direction. People always want to be part of what is cool. It's not about trying to be something you're not, it's more about longing to have a certain identity and wanting to belong to a group. We're a contradiction to this, we are playing music so we don't have to be a part of conventional groups, and we have created our own little group. It is cool however that the kind of music that we are doing is gaining a lot of attention.

MM: Is recognition important for the band?

Pete: No… if the goal of making music was recognition and money, we would have been doing something else. I don't want to sound arrogant or anything, because honestly that's not my intent, but we have the talent to write commercially successful music. We just don't feel good about it. We have been asked to write music for a commercial and we did it for the fun of it, but it is not hard to write that kind of music. The music we play now is just so much more fun. And as far as the money goes, we now make enough money to pay our rent. On the underground level, that is very successful. If we get bigger? I don't know what influence that will have on our music and outlook on things. If we get big, that's great, but the main reason for being will still be, enjoying playing live. We now have the luxury of having a dialogue with our label, which is something we didn't always have. Especially with our previous company (Earache Records – Martijn.). Right now we are in a really good spot. We feel very comfortable.

MM: You still feel comfortable after being on the road for nine weeks?

Pete: Nine weeks on the road just wears you down. Mentally it just numbs you. You become a square head… you wake up, you eat, you shower, you prepare for the gig, play the gig and go back to sleep. You become a robot more than anything else. Good or bad? I don't know, we will be doing 200 more shows this year; we will literally be touring until the end of the year. Right now, we will be home in three days so that's something to look forward too. I haven't seen my kids for two months and I really want to go home now.

MM: When comparing your music to older metal, it seems like you use shorter solos and it there's much more punch. Do you think that's a product of this day and age?

Pete: I think that has to do with us all coming from a hardcore and deathmetal background. With all the music we listen to in the band, be it John Coltrane or Exodus, we hear all those things in it and then we apply it to our music. Usually when we hear things, it's like; "Yeah, that's really cool, but it might have been better if it was done this way", and we do it that way with our songs. We take it and change it to make it The Haunted. It often feels, with writing music like this, that we are a part of everything. We don't really care where we pick the inspiration from; we don't want to limit ourselves in anyway.

MM: That's what interests me about The Haunted, as you seem to fit in with hardcore, metal and death metal...

Pete: Our band is all and none of these genres. We never started out saying we're playing metal. It really is what is it, our music.

MM: And are you trying to break down barriers?

Pete: We are not trying to break down barriers on purpose, we are trying to put together different aspects of music that we like, without going "Well, that's not metal, we won't use it". We are trying to make music that you can get into emotionally. It's about the music, not about the egos so much. For us the band is about removing the ego and taking the band above any single individual. I think you can feel that aspect of the bands character at any concert, as it seems the fans come from all different directions. That's not a big deal. There's not one group of people saying they are "our" band. They are at a Haunted show because they're fans of The Haunted . We don't fit in to good with any genre and that's a good thing in my opinion.

MM: That's interesting because Century Media seem to have emphasised the metal side of The Haunted…

Pete: That's ridiculous, we have never set out to be just that.

MM: Well, I mentioned it because I was wondering how you try to prevent being labelled?

Pete: By constantly talking about it in interviews like this. (laughter). No, I mean that's the only thing we can do really. We make our music and we play, and when people ask us about it, we will talk about it. I really think this whole labelling thing is kind of ridiculous and most people will acknowledge that as well.

MM: Being a journalist you try to describe a certain sound into words and as such the whole labelling process comes into being. But personally, I think The Haunted stand dead centre in any and all styles associated with "hard music"…

Pete: Yeah that's what we are trying to do. We like all this stuff, so why not utilise, and be a part of it. There's so much cool stuff out there and it's more interesting to use all the elements. We are making music that is very focused and has a high intensity. But in terms of the labelling…. I don't know that's just the world we live in.

MM: On "One Kill Wonder" you flirted with Slayer and on "eVOLVEr" you have Lou Koller of Sick of It All doing guest vocals, is that a way of also underlining that intention?

Pete: I think it's more a matter of circumstance. "One Kill Wonder", the whole record, came about in just two months. The guys went into the studio after two months rehearsal, and about half the songs were written in the week before recording them. They recorded the album really quickly, in three weeks or something. And the lyrics were just swept together. "One Kill Wonder" stands out in that respect from the other records, I can honestly say I feel it is a "rushed" record. Now back to the last record, having Lou on there was also a coincidence. We had the song done, and Thomas, the bassplayer was singing these parts on it. And then we played a tape to someone from the Distribution Company in Sweden who also happened to do the Sick of it All records there. She said, you should ask Lou Koller to do that song, as it would really make it stand out. And I thought: "Lou has probably never even heard of us, so no way he's going to do this." She went down to see the band in Hamburg where they were playing about three days later and played him this song. Apparently he was a Haunted fan, and when she mentioned he should be on the record, he replied it would be really cool. Sometime later when they were playing Gothenburg, she called us again and said Lou was ready to record the song with us. It was amazing, he came up to the studio and was there drinking coffee and singing these lines. In the end it all came down to coincidence.

MM: Still, it seems, almost unconsciously maybe, that it's your way of trying to break down barriers…

Pete: I guess. Music in itself transcends. People like to build these separate spaces, but music can get above that. You cannot limit it. You should never say "I am part of this lifestyle'. Maybe you like this, and that, and that, but leave it at that. We are so diverse as human beings, why limit anything?. Life is worth so much more if we let go of all the rigid social structures. We put so many layers of varnish on top of who we really are. We can't be in control all the time. Life is chaotic and we should take note of that and use it.

MM: How does that work lyrically? With music you can utilise a lot of influences and it becomes The Haunted. With lyrics isn't it
a lot more difficult?. Words seem to be much more limited...

Pete: Nope…

MM: You can really do the same with words as you can with music?

Pete: Absolutely! Even more so. If you are interested there's so much out there to learn from, and to be inspired by. Personally I'm in love with words. I really enjoy writing and playing with the lyrics. It just adds to the learning and understanding of what everything is about. Especially now that I'm getting older, but also because of what I read and come across. It really helps me to understand the views of others, and to respect that. Writing music can change your feelings about certain things, and in exactly the same way as it happens with music, it can happen with words.

MM: I've always thought that music goes straight for the heart and is more universal than words…

Pete: Initially, yes. I also think there's a universal language within music and that we underestimate the power of that sometimes. Just look at very young kids, they don't use an actual language but they will understand what music is about emotionally. If you fail to understand this power you'll end up with the wrong impression. I think it is really important that with lyrics you try to interpret the music. Lyrics, or words, are there to enhance and clarify. Sometimes they are also used to confuse, but you always have to be very clear what you are doing with words. Personally, I think that within heavy music language is misused a lot. We seem to be overusing certain expressions and clichés.

MM: Aren't lyrics often just a bunch of words used to fit and compliment the line of music?

Pete: Oh yeah, a lot of the time, music is not really made to achieve anything. It's nothing but a justifiable way of being part of some kind of scene. A lot of metal, hardcore, punk and hiphop bands are doing this not for of because of the music, but as some kind of social alibi. What it does achieve is that they use music just to be in a scene, to be cool and gain a higher social status. Again, it is not going to achieve anything if you are only putting a bunch of clichés together. In a way this is sort of destructive as it only wastes peoples time and space. From a certain perspective, it's good as people feel socially connected and come out to have a good time, but it doesn't do anything but confirm previously stated "rules". It carries tom many past truths and it not really here and now. It is more interesting to see why we do the music we do and what comes out of it. We are trying to interpret the group, and ourselves and you have to do a lot of talking and listening to understand each other. It's important to listen to each other.

MM: What about when you're playing in a country where people don't speak any English?. Doesn't the enhancement loose its power?

Pete: In Japan they translate the lyrics in the booklets. Which is actually a very cool thing in my opinion. They feel it is so important. It's just like with the Einstürzende Neubauten albums, they have lyrics in German and English. I think that adds something extra to the power of words. We should probably do that for all different countries where we release our music. But it's true, a lot of times people do not understand our lyrics if they are not from traditionally Anglo-Saxon countries or countries where people master English very well. They understand the energy, but miss out on the content.

MM: Have you played in South America? That's a continent where English is not widely used, but they all speak Spanish...(apart from Brazil, where Portuguese is the main language – Tim)

Pete: Personally I haven't played there with The Haunted yet, but the other guys played in Chile. Apparently we'll be going there this fall, but I haven't got a clue as of yet. But, bringing it back to me, I can never dictate how people will perceive our music. There's always the possibility of the listener taking something out of it we didn't put in there, no matter how we present it.

MM: That's understandable as you always use your European or Swedish background when writing songs, and when you go to South America or Japan they don't understand this background…

Pete: Exactly.

MM: We've talked about "One Kill Wonder" standing our lyrically, but does "eVOLVEr" stand out on that level too? There are overtly socially aware lyrics in songs like; "Who Will Decide" and "Sabotage".

Pete: That is nothing really new. It does shine through in a song like "Burner" on the first album. It has been released as an extra track in some countries, and on some samplers here and there. "Now You Know" is also a song like that. It has been with us since the first album, but because we have really violent imagery with a couple of other songs it might not have come out that way. Some people just look at one or two titles, or a record cover and decide not to listen to it. It's like: "Oh well, you guys sing about serial killers, so I won't listen to it". And this is a topic, which we used for "The Haunted Made Me Do It" album. The entire album isn't about serial killers; it's also about the methodology of the media in finding scapegoats. Why is there violent crime? What is the reason for it? What's the whole process behind doing violent things to yourself and others? If you look at the artwork… it is there and we hoped most people would see it like that. We do have a couple of serial killers on the cover so that's where these ideas came from, and why people labelled us as such.

MM: So now you play "serial killer metal"…

Pete: (laughter)… Yeah, people seem to think so. But for the record, I'd just like to state one more time: We are not about serial killers!!!

MM: One other thing that also stood out for me as far as your lyrics are concerned; you always seem to oppose any outside influence. Be it, the government or any other body or people who try to tell you what to do, or try to force you in a certain direction...

Pete: On this subject I can only speak for myself, as I know the other band members thing differently about it. I'm an anarchist. I feel very strongly about being able to choose my own direction in life. I really think I should have that freedom, and I think other people should have that freedom as well. We mostly agree on this within the band, but not always. There are things we all feel totally different about. That's okay, because that's good for discussion. I am not convinced by capitalist society. I think it is dysfunctional. It's a very old idea, which is not working anymore, if it ever has. We have tried it for a couple of hundred years and it didn't work. I think it is about time we try another political idea. It's not capitalism because we tried that, and it can't be fascism because we tried that. That didn't work, and we even tried communism in its primitive form that didn't work either. So we need to try something else and I think the solution lies within anarchism. That's an ideological belief of mine, but it's something I believe in strongly.

MM: Is that also something you use in your lyrics? Trying to get people thinking about different ways they could lead their lives?

Pete: It's not my intent to propagate it. It is not my right to do so. I really don't think I have that right. I do think however that everyone is responsible for deciding what they would like to do with their lives. That's a trend that goes right through all forms of extreme music, be it punkrock, be it metal, hardcore or hi-phop. There's a libertarian scene with it. I personally believe that in order to achieve this, we as individuals need to take responsibility. Now, responsibility might sound very boring to some. Especially when you have this point of view, where you think: "I won't be around anymore in fifty years so, well fuck it!" That's usually what happens when you life in a middleclass, white, male dominated society like we have in Europe. We are terribly spoiled; we are too spoiled to even be regarded as hedonist. If you try to be a hedonist in this society you will ruin nothing except yourself. We simply have it so good. So our hedonism leads to nothing more than destruction, and then it's missing the point. In this society that just doesn't work and that is what I mean with responsibility, you need to decide what you would like to do and take that path.

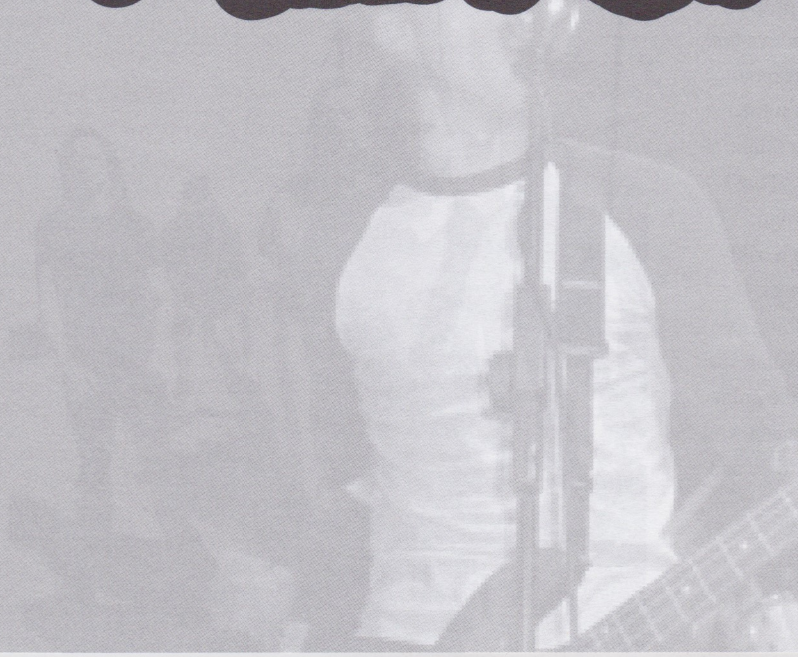
MM: Does your belief in individuality and complete individual freedom have an effect on the band? You are, after all, still a part of that thing we call the music business…

Pete: Absolutely, We try to exist as a group of people, be it a family, a village or a band. In a capitalist world the goal would be to make money, so you can prevail. In a non-capitalist world the aim would be to create in order to prevail. Because if you create you have something to trade. It's just very simple, it's not a question of gaining anything, about accumulation of wealth. Whichever way you look at it our band is nothing but a co-operative. And to make it work the members of the band need to constantly communicate about it. How we want to do things… We drive people crazy with this because we decide upon and choose our direction very slowly and very carefully. That sometimes really frustrates people like record companies or managers.

MM: Do you want to be in everything related to the band? The artwork, the booking, the merchandise?

Pete: We want input on that. Up until this last record the band was like Fugazi. The guitarplayer and the bassplayer took care of the management, the booking… everything. And they have done that from day one. Now we have come to a point were there are so many people involved, we are trying to do the whole thing through a manager. We will see how that works as we only had one for about 8 months now. We will see in about a year from now. And I know we are driving him crazy because we never give straight answers to anything. We can't! We have to know and have to feel, so decisions can take a couple of months.

TERROR



I guess by now, most of you folks are at least familiar with the name Terror, even if you're not familiar with their music. Rumours seem to follow the band at every turn, so we figured it was time to track down them down and find out the truth, find out exactly what makes these guys tick…

Questions by Tim, Interview by Pete

MM: Who are you? What's your worst personal habit? What's the most hardcore thing about you, and what's the most hardcore thing you've ever done?

Scott: My name's Scott. I scream (because I can't sing) in the band Terror, form Los Angeles. My worst personal habit is my temper, because I freak out and then I feel bad afterwards all the time. I don't want to come off sounding stupid or tacky but I discovered hardcore in 1987 and I've never looked back. I go to every single show I can, I've always played in bands; I can't pick out the most hardcore thing about me, every day of my life I'm just a hardcore kid at heart and have fun. Probably the most hardcore thing about me is that I'm 32 and I still enjoy all the shows, and the demos and the fanzines. Before I saw your zine - I usually don't do any interviews because I just answer so many questions that I just end up saying the same thing. So I usually try to get someone else in the band to do it. Then when I saw it, it looks like a cool zine and I thought I'd rather do something like this than some fucking on –line metal thing. Yeah, I don't know. I guess the most hardcore thing about me is that I'm 32 and going to shows and buying demos and singing along to bands with demos where the kids are half my age.

MM: It's been a little while since the release of 'One With the Underdog'. How indicative now do you feel it is of Terror as a band and how well do you think it represents what the band is doing and what it hopes to achieve?

Scott: 110%. It's been out less than a year and this is the first time to Europe and the UK since it came out. The style of the new songs we've been writing are right along – it's not going to be the same record but it's always gonna be Terror - and it's always gonna be in your face, pissed off, no gimmicks, no bullshit, no frills and I think that record, I think everything about it except the layout really is 110% representation of what we're about still and what we always will be. I think there is a little bit of difference between 'One With the Underdog' and 'Lowest of the Low' I think we grew a little bit and I think we got a little more of a Madball influence which is something that's fine with me. And I'm sure the newer stuff we've been writing will hopefully be Terror but to the next level. More pissed off, faster, the breakouts hitting harder and hopefully the lyrics are even better than the last one – I'm really happy with the lyrics on 'One With the Underdog'. I've been having trouble writing lyrics since then; I've been in a void.

MM: What do you think is the most common misconception about Terror and what is the strangest rumour you've ever heard about Terror or yourself?

Scott: Well, that I'm straight edge – I've never in my life been straight edge, I mean, like I was going to see, like Youth of Today, stoned way back. I'm all for straight edge, I think it's a fucking amazing thing and some of my best friends are straight edge but, I don't know, it's not me. A lot of people meet me and they see me drinking or smoking weed and they're like 'you sold out straight edge?' and I'm like 'no, I never was.' The biggest misconception with Terror is that, I don't' know, when you're up there in the United States there's this huge thing that we advocate violence at all out shows; that there's fights and riots. Two summers ago we had a lot of problems at out shows, a lot of people getting beat up – it was really ugly and I was feeling sad because it's really scary and it wasn't anything that we wanted to happen. I think it was just a combination of our music and the fact that we draw not just posi-hardcore kids or tough guy hardcore kids but everyone, even like newer, like Trustkill type hardcore kids. So everyone would be there at once, and sometimes when you take that and all the high school bullshit hardcore has and all the fucking egos, all that shit at once turns into a pretty bad situation. We've tried our best to get away from that and make sure there's no fights at our shows. The only thing that really bothered me is that people really kinda pointed their fingers at us. Every time it happened we'd stop and if it kept going on we'd stop the show. There's nothing really you can do about it. You can't police who comes to your shows and hold their hand and tell them what to do. All we can do is play and ask everyone to be positive and have fun because if you don't we'll stop playing.

MM: The sex symbol thing, with your bassist, Carl being voted sexiest vegan in the PETA contest. How do you think Carl's sex symbol status is going to affect and aid the band?

Scott: If you knew Carl, he is the quietest. He doesn't talk about girls. He has girls come up to him and talk about how cute he is but he's the most shy and, like, I don't know how to but it – I don't want to make him sound bad, because he's not, he's awesome, but he's just like – like our drummer, that's all he talks about: girls girls girls girls girls. But our bassist is always like 'uh, whatever, if some girl comes across to talk to me, that's not the kind of girl I want to be with'. But he's funny. We make fun of him and he makes fun of himself because of that. It's some stupid shit. I thought it was something amazing but, I don't remember but we looked at the list and, I think Anthony Kiedis from the Red Hot Chilli Peppers was on it, all sorts of people. There's a list, there's all these rappers and stuff.

MM: Given that each generation fails to understand the next one, I was wondering what your family thought about both the band and hardcore in general?

Scott: It's pretty sad because I've been doing bands since – for a long time – 10 to 15 years and neither my mom or my dad has ever come to see any of my bands play. I would think, somewhere along the way, especially since the only time now they ever really get a chance to see me is when I'm in town for minute. I think my mom is finally starting to get why I do this because she's hearing about our name and seeing us in places. My mom is remarried and has a stepson and I got an e-mail from my mom saying him and his friends are into Terror and stuff and she can't believe it so that was kinda cool. I don't think that, no matter what they could ever get it. I would think in some ways that my mom's happy for me that I travel the world, haven' t worked a job and have fun and muck around but 'you're getting kinda old – you'd better watch your shit' y'know.

MM: How does playing and touring with Terror differ from playing and touring with Buried Alive? How have you changed between each band and what have you learned about yourself from playing in both bands?

Scott: That's good. First of all, just in general it's the same but Terror has grown bigger than, I guess Buried Alive ever was. At first, you know, Terrors first tour was in a mini-van that we rented that I illegally hooked up a trailer hitch and we put a U-Haul trailer on it, ruined the engine – we still get all these credit people after me because we ruined this van we rented. So at first it was the same thing: playing to not that many people and playing wherever people would give us shows but Buried Alive had some really good shows and some not so good shows but it was still fun – it's always fun. If you're worried about money and turnout or if people thought you were great or not then you're doing it for the wrong reasons. In that aspect I'm just still out there playing and having fun. With Terror now we just do a little more and it's a little easier at this point because we've paid our dues and we're actually at the point where we draw people and we make a little bit of money. But I still drive a 1990 Honda and live in one room with my dog and my girlfriend. So we're not getting anywhere too much but I think that with all the other bands I was in besides Terror we broke up. I think it's because I'm an asshole and I freak out like I said, my temper; I'll let these things build up then I'll just freak out and scream at people and throw things and shit and turn into an asshole. Ten minutes later I knew I was a dick and apologised but I think to them it was like 'I don't want to be around this dick all the time' and that was one of the reasons that my old bands broke up. There was always more to it than that, like people's – other people's- attitude problems, y'know their weird changes in life. But I've really realised that if you're gonna be in a band and do this you've gotta learn to appreciate that people you're with and learn to understand what makes them do the things they do and get along better. Right now we've had the same line-up for two years, playing a show almost every day of our lives and things have been going really smoothly and more than that we're having fun and there's no bullshit going on.

MM: For me it always felt like Buried Alive had more of a metal edge to it and Terror has more of a stripped down basic hardcore feel to it.

Scott: Yeah, definitely. I mean Buried Alive was always more of a straightforward hardcore band with a little more metal tinge to it – kind of a Hatebreed influence. Terror's more like… I think our influences are more like Madball and Strife and maybe even older stuff.

MM: So what, in your opinion is it about hardcore that seems to create the devotion that walks hand in hand with it?

Scott: The thing for me is the only place that I've ever been or ever followed where I feel I can be myself and the people around me are somewhat genuine, and that I can put my faith in. The music, obviously means a lot to me, the aggression, the energy and more than that the lyrics really really – that's what stands out to me and makes a band important to me if they have lyrics that that I can understand or feel. Even if I don't agree with them, if I know they're coming from their heart and they're saying something that really means something to them and other people then that means a lot to me. I think for me it's just a place to stay young and to escape from all the bullshit in the world and the shit that life feeds me. It's the only place I've ever found where I can be myself and I don't give a fuck about how I look or how old I'm getting. I'm just gonna be myself and have fun and I know I'll always have friends and that's something that keeps me grounded – pretty much keeps me alive and keeps me happy.

MM: Going back to what you were saying about the violence: violence and hardcore, what do you think of the whole tough-guy thing and why do you think the level of violence seems to be on the increase?

Scott: If you take the whole tough guy thing I've come across and met a lot of people that actually came from a rough background and a place that made them hard and made them – that's who they are. For the most part, hardcore kids are fucking suburban nurds that come from the mall and stuff like that. Someone like that who's trying to be tough or trying to put on a front that they're tough it's a joke. Why would you wanna be like that? It's not a good way to live. But I think that the whole roots of hardcore is street level. People from the city that were angry and pissed off and that's the way hardcore was started so hopefully there's still people like that around to keep it in check. And there's always gonna be real people that are hard and pissed off because they have to be and because that was their world and then there's always gonna be a bunch of people who are just, like, trying to be like that for whatever reason. I don't think there's ever a reason for a fight at a show unless maybe some Nazi comes to a show. A little internet gossip, or someone fucked your girlfriend or blah blah blah

– save that shit for after the show, because all you're gonna do is get the club shut down. It's gonna make promoters not want to book up shows, get clubs shut down. Pretty much it's only counter-productive, and when I see hardcore chicks fighting hardcore chicks it sometimes makes me question what the point of all this is.

MM: Do you think that hardcore is an age specific community and if not why not? Is there an element of ageism within the scene?

Scott: I don't think there's any barriers, any specific age, race, gender, religious beliefs – I think hardcore's for everybody and, I don't know, I think there's really something positive and important; for me hardcore's a teacher. It taught me that it's OK that I'm dating a Korean girl, and if some dude wants to stick his dick in another dude's butt – I'm all right with that. It's not something that I'd really look into but if I see two dudes walking down the street holding hands then I'm fine with that. I think girls should have a huge part in hardcore. I get really psyched when I see like – you know we played with The Business a couple of weeks ago, Mickey Fitz and, I don't know how old he is but he's gotta be pretty old. Those are the kind of people I really look up to and it makes me feel like I still have some time left in me to keep doing this, so I think it's for everybody. And like I said it's taught me so much and it hasn't taught me anything bad. It's taught me all things that are open-mindedness and loving life and not worrying about how much money is in my pocket, just being happy that I'm in fucking Wales with my stupid band and playing my stupid music. I think that everybody needs to learn what hardcore's teaching everybody.

MM: If hardcore had to be defined by three records, what three records do you think sum up the term hardcore and why?
Scott: I would say, shit, I would go with 'Victim in Pain' – Agnostic Front, 'Minor Threat' – Minor Threat and 'Those Who Fear Tomorrow' – Integrity. Those aren't my favourite records, I was just thinking of a range of things; like I think that AF was the start of things, of hardcore, maybe not the first thing, you know AF and obviously Minor Threat before AF that really shaped the sound and the ideals. Whether it be a band like Minor Threat that's straight edge, a little closer to punk and a little more positive or AF, a little more street wise and a little more skin head and a little more rough and pissed off. Then I think someone like Integrity came along later and had a little more metal influence in it and a darker side, a kind of an evil side. It really affected hardcore and changed it in some ways. Lyrically they're all different but all to me represent what hardcore is all about. I would love to put 'Don't Forget the Struggle'- Warzone in there and something from the West Coast should maybe be in there but, who knows. Too many things.

MM: How do you think hardcore's cross into the mainstream has affected the scene? Has the mainstream's attention been positive or detrimental to the scene?

Scott: I think it's been both actually. I think right now it's crazy because, like, magazines – you can pick them up and I see a bunch of my friends, bands like Terror. Terror is by no means a big hardcore band. We're, like, average and we're living off our band and we're playing nicer venues and getting bigger tours with bigger bands and I think that's really cool. And for a band like Terror it's cool for us because we're really respecting the roots of hardcore. We really respect the past and give praise for the past but are holding onto the roots of what hardcore actually is on the inside, like mentally, what it is. But I'm trying to push that on kids that don't really know what it is yet because hardcore's expanded to so many different kids that there's a lot of people that – if you went to a hardcore show and said 'what do you think of Agnostic Front' they'd be, like, 'who' and that to me is kind of sad. On the negative side that's sad, but a band like us that's alive and doing it right now 110% - and that's not to say Agnostic Front isn't' – we're just trying to take everything that hardcore has given to us and taught us and try to keep it alive and keep it growing and that's a good thing. And being able to live off our band, that's a good thing. If anyone says that if you make any money that you're selling out, that's the dumbest thing in the world. If you're able to live off what you're doing and you're doing it from the heart – you know people in the band have got kids, everyone's got rent. If you can live your life doing what you love but don't sacrifice any of your integrity for it, don't change for anyone just do what you love. That's living the most punk rock life in the world. On another level I think it's kinda sad because there are a lot of bands out there that are on hardcore labels and are called hardcore and draw hardcore kids but I don't think any of the people that go to these shows and see these bands know or care to know what hardcore really is. It's just an easy term these days to put on your band and know that you'll have a label and some 'fans' I guess if you want to call the people who come to your show fans. And if they're not… I always say a hardcore band is any music coming out of a group of hardcore kids that get together and play music as a hardcore band whether it sounds like Sheer Terror or Hot Water Music, to me those are hardcore bands. A lot of these people today are not hardcore kids - just like 'mall kids' who are more concerned about look and they play a certain 'style' and then they just call it hardcore and it's not. So I think that really waters down and takes away from the truth and the honesty of hardcore.
MM: What do you think of the modern hardcore scene and what's wrong and what's right with modern hardcore today?
Scott: I think I just said what was wrong. I think a lot of people are just forgetting about where hardcore came from. A lot of the bands who laid down the foundation don't get any

respect. A lot of newer bands that I don't even think care about hardcore, sell a lot of records and kind of treat it all like it's a rock thing or a concert thing when it really fucking isn't. I hear people talking about bands and record sales, videos and being on the cover of this magazine and I'm like, this isn't fucking…this has nothing to do with what this is about. I can sit here and dwell on all the negatives, but pretty much what I do is focus on the good stuff. There are so many bands right now that are amazing, there are so many new bands…you know, a lot of people just see these metal core bands or shows or whatever and think that's what's going on, but I go to shows all over the United States and the world and there are hardcore scenes full of hardcore kids everywhere, every fucking day they're doing it right and doing it for the right reasons. So, instead of focussing on the bullshit, I just surround myself with and keep my head up by thinking about the good shit, because there really are good bands, there's all these awesome demo's coming out, I see fanzines every once in a while and there's still good shit everywhere. We just did a tour of the United States with Comeback Kid and Modern Life Is War and it was one of the best tours that I've been on in my life and it was really refreshing to play smaller clubs with no barriers, full of just straight up Hardcore kids that were there, with tons of energy, just going off from the beginning of the show until the end. It really, really made me appreciate Terror and helped me to know that Hardcore is doing really good right now…and we just played with Madball two days ago. That keeps me going to…

MM: Is there anything that you miss about the old days of hardcore?

Scott: What I miss most is just being able to go to a fucking show and not have to talk to everybody. There's preconceived notions about me all these things that I've done or haven't done. Just from being around I know a lot of people, made enemies with people, made friends with people. I've got friends everywhere and it's really hard for me to just go to a show and enjoy myself and not have to worry about the bullshit. I love hip-hop and I think there are so many similarities between hip-hop and hardcore and there are so many things that make them the same. A lot of people think oh rap that's just bullshit and I'm like 'yeah rap is bullshit but there's this whole community, a hip-hop community that's very comparable to hardcore.

MM: It's the same context as with hardcore. They have their belief in what they're doing the same way that we have belief in what we're doing with hardcore.

Scott: As much as lyrics have gone down in hardcore if I listen to hip-hop the lyrics really inspire me and fucking keep me thinking. But it's amazing for me that now I go to hip-hop shows and nobody knows who I am, no-one cares who I am, no-one wants to talk to me and I can just go watch the fucking the groups and the people I want to see then I get in my car and go home. When I got into hardcore that's what it was, it was just the music and the bands and now when I go to a hardcore show it's like: talk to this person and I know this girl did this to my friends I need to stay away from her; this person used to be in my band and I kicked him out so he thinks I'm a dick blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah….. that's it. That's what I miss.

MM: What if anything do you think this era of hardcore has brought to the scene that you think would have been nice back in the old days?

Scott: I think it's cool now that bands have so many different types of merch. Back when I went to shows, there was one shirt, maybe, one size; and now bands have belts and hats, posters and blah blah blah blah blah and if I had all that old shit for all the old bands I liked that would be really cool.

MM: How would you sum up Scott Voegel as a person if you had to?

Scott: Today? I think I'm positive, calmer, genuine, definitely back my words up with my actions, dedicated, lazy, in love with television, antisocial – if you see me at a hardcore show I'm pretty social but anywhere else – my least favourite thing is when I'm in a line at the supermarket and a person near me starts talking to me. I have nothing in common with people so I hate it. I'm very antisocial. Especially, like, me and my girlfriend link up and go to the mall. On the way to the mall I'll smoke weed and when we get there I look at all the people and just want to leave… I'm such an idiot. I speak my mind and sometimes too quick for my own good without thinking, stupid temper and I'm trying my hardest to work on it; in love with Madball, I pretend I'm gonna quit drinking every day, in the day and at night I'm drunk. I always say to my friend 'I'm not drinking ever again' and they're like 'OK we'll see you later.' I want to think of one more because I don't want to end on alcohol…. Oh yeah, I'm happy to be alive.

MM: Where do you see yourself in ten years? What do you think you'll be doing? What would you like to be doing? And if you weren't playing in Terror what do you think you'd be doing?

Scott:: I don't really know. I don't have any skills, but I love music, all types of music and I've met a lot of people through the years so I'd like to see myself maybe booking bands or managing bands, just taking everything that I've learned from being in bands and knowing music and how to write a song, how to tour, using that… I don't think I'll be jumping around on stage like a ten year-old then, but I hope to still be involved in music and hopefully hardcore. I don't see myself getting out and the only way I can see that is if I literally don't see myself sitting behind a desk or anything like that. I won't do that.

MM: What's on the immediate horizon for Terror at the moment?

Scott: Right now we're in Europe for another two weeks, then we go back to the United States and do – I'm gonna tell you my life up until about February – we're gonna do Sounds of the Underground Tour which is kinda like – we're doing the last two weeks of it – it's kinda like a – I don't want to say an arts festival on tour – it's a travelling festival thing with Madball from Rhode Island, Earth, Flame of God, Gwar, Clutch…. It's kinda cool. We're doing that then we're going to Japan for the second time which is really cool, we're doing a three week Canadian tour with Converge, then we're going to do a little headlining tour with our friends Donny Brook and a couple of other bands. Then we've got an amazing tour – Shadows Fall, Fear Factory and Bleeding Through with Terror for five weeks in the US. Then it will be December and we're gonna stop. We've already written a lot of songs but then we'll really take time in December / January to write and then maybe record, get a new record and start over.

MM: OK the floor is yours. Anything you'd like to add?
Scott: The only frustration that I have in my mind right now is we've been over here for five days now and I haven't done anything except wake up, drive, go to the show, shower, get in the van, drive, go to the show, shower. We've been fucking driving like crazy. I haven't done anything. We haven't been to a red light district. We haven't done anything. I haven't done anything at all I'm just kind of pissed off about that but other than that everything's pretty good so.. We've been having like, nine hour drives and festivals every day and it's been overwhelmingly tiring. Other than that – that's why my voice is like – usually my voice is really strong. It's just that not sleeping and driving all day and sweating, I'm just like dead. Other than that I'm trying to stay positive.

MASS (REVIEWS)

Affirmation - Never Forget (Courage To Care)
New one on me and I think they may be relatively new as well. Great melodic (sort of) old school hardcore that may be reminiscent of Turning Point and possibly Silencer 7 (or Anthem Of The Century as some of you may remember them). This really is an awesome hardcore release from a label that does a zine of the same name if I am correct. 11 tracks of great hardcore with catchy as hell guitar lines that I reckon should not be looked over and tested out by all. PETE.

Amorphis - Eclipse (Nuclear Blast Records)
Whatever this Finnish band has put out it always got compared to their best releases "Tales From a Thousand Lakes" (1994) and "Elegy" (1996), but it seemed they could never reach that amazing level again. And at the end of 2004 all took a turn for the worst concerning the bands existance. They had to cancel a tour through North America and singer Pasi decided to dedicate his time to his family. Fortunatly the rest of the band didn't thrown in the towel, and I will be forever grateful to them. "Eclipse" the the best Amorphis record since "Tales", the interesting tension between clean sung vocals, and grunts, with doomy riff laden songs back to back with midtempo metalrock tracks. Some sort of missing link in between the bands darkness spit out with the two first albums, and the lighter approach by the releases that followed. All trademarks which made Amorphis great have returned, even the inspiration is drawn from the ancient Kalevala scriptures again. Opener "Two Moons" shows the way with being, next to "Black Winter Day", the best Amorphis song I have ever heard. In this day and age where bands like H.I.M. have taken dreamy and gothic like music to the mainstrean, Amorphis can't get passed not having minor resemblances, but don't forget who caused a stir in the underground first.
Martijn Welzen

ANS – Romancing The Phone 7" (Banal Existence – berecords@aol.com)
Always good to start a Summer's day with a healthy dose of skate core, and ANS just about fit that bill to a tee with this four track seven inch. Like JFA on steroids mainlining amphetamines with a dose of D.I. thrown in for good measure, ANS make you want to hit the ramp, and if my knee's weren't shot to shit, that's exactly what I'd be doing right now, instead of sitting in front of a PC getting slowly irradiated…
Tim Mass Movement

Anti-Nowhere League- Kings & Queens (Captain Oi!)
What's it been over 20 years since the last ANL album? I suppose some peopel have waiting a long while for this. It does pick up where they left off (you be the judge of whetether that is good or bad), Big midtempo riffs, silly borderline offensive lyrics, cool, yet scummy album art. I don't know, Animal and company have always seemed a bit...duh....
Chris Shary

Apiary - Lost In Focus (Metal Blade)
When you see a record label with a name like this then you only need one guess as to what you about to embark upon your ears. That's right metal and good metal at that. This is chaos breeding ugly as it could ever breed and reminded me of the chaotic elements of Dillinger and Meshuggah. Like you are compelled to look at a grotesque dog with two heads, you are compelled to keep listening to this So-Cal outfit that are more than just metal as you can hear the hardcore roots deeply embedded in the sound underneath the chaos of this head caving onslaught. This is the shit that you need to keep you on your toes and your head mashed.
PETE.

Ark – Nine Days To No One (Engineer)
A new Ark album, thought The Impaler, how exciting! Now that Jorn is doing Masterplan, I thought he had put Ark on ice…. Well, he had. This is NOT the Euro power metal vocal god, though this band also seems to have a bible-thumping slant to them. A little hint lads: do a Google search on band names before committing; NOTHING worse than naming your band something that has been used already, and by a band with a ton of records out there, at that. The record itself is pretty good. It is that style of slow and chunky metalcore with breakdowns and fast parts, throat-shredding vocals mixed with impassioned shouts—think Ebullition Records' entire catalogue prior to the first Monster X record. It's very much in that early 90s San Diego screamo meets Belgian H8000 area. The vocals are too low in the mix, but otherwise, a solid record. Six fairly long songs and a hidden bonus track, plus really nice packaging with a passage from Genesis 6:17 so you can feel the spirit. Just change the name, boys, lest ye be sued by the wrathful ex-vocalist for Yngwie Malmsteen's band.
The Impaler

As Hope Dies - As Hope Dies (Still Life)
5 track MCD release on Still Life by these Orange County residents that I believe have now split up which I find a bit of a shame as I have only now just heard of them and must say that I am digging this CD which I can see people calling essentially metalcore but there is a huge blend of Swedish deathcore to it as well which makes this stand out from the norm. To me I would possibly say that they take elements of Shadows Fall, Darkest Hour and Poison The Well and I'd say they take the best elements of said bands at that. This portrays great guttural vocals with some amazing technical guitar riffery which is well worth the purchase.
PETE.

Bayside – Acoustic - cd/dvd (Victory Records)
Not the world's biggest Bayside fan in fact I can honestly say that I've never really given them a good listen but surprisingly the transition to acoustic does them a favour and is quite pleasing to my ears. This is a rework of 8 of their songs in a tribute to their recently deceased drummer and in all fairness it does him justice and any Bayside fan is in for a treat with this one or in fact anyone who wants something acoustic to listen to would also not go wrong with this one. The other two tracks on this disc are covers one being an Elliot Smith song the other being a smoking popes track with aint bad to be honest. As for the Dvd it's basically a handful of the other songs performed live (which is done really well) and also a tribute video to their drummer. All in all a good cd and an equally good dvd.
Bunky

Bombshell Rocks – The Conclusion (Household Name)
Here's a band that has been rockin' for over a decade, and it shows. They are tight, focused, and confident. If you are unfamiliar with Bombshell Rocks, reference street-punk bands like Dropkick Murphys, classic punk like The Clash, and the old SF standby Operation Ivy. On a purely personal level, I am not into this style enough to really listen to it for my own enjoyment. But on a purely musical level, I'm no idiot—if you have ANY interest in this style of punk rock you need to run, not walk, wherever you need to go and buy this record and get yourself a ticket to their next show because they are a damn exciting live band, similar in passion and spirit to Swingin' Utters. The songs are catchy, the production is amazing, and the CD packaging is fantastic. Definitely a winner.
The Impaler

Chain Breaker – S/T 7" (Vendetta)
1,2,3,4… and let's go, finger pointing, crust action, whip it up and watch it go! Youth crew meets D-Beat insanity from this German crew, who nearly drove me to the point of insanity, with their incredible brand of danceable HC, that's sort like Ad Nauseam doing the Charleston with Youth Of Today whilst The Gorilla Biscuits watch from the sidelines. Do your damnedest to track it down, it's more than worth it…. Tim Mass Movement

Chain Collector – The Masquerade (Sound Riot)
Makes a nice change to actually find one of the so-called newer metal bands that I like, especially as they're doing the twin vocal (one clean, one growled) that's usually a no-no as far as I'm concerned.
I can't help thinking that the band sound like an amalgamation of At The Gates, Funeral For A Friend and The Haunted, combining a newer fresh sound, with thrash metal and touches of the famed Gothenburg sound – yeah, this is a definite keeper, one I'm going to be playing for a while. I can't help thinking that all the songs are linked by some weird thread, but as I didn't get the lyric sheet, or even a one sheet with this release, all I've got to go on is the music – still you can't have it all, and I guess I'm just going to have to make the concept up myself…hmmm, "Paradise Lost" cross threading through "The Trail Of Cthulhu" with car chases, explosions and naked ladies all culminating in a fight to the death with the Illuminati. Yeah, that'll do… Tim Mass Movement

Chang Ffos – Trust This Arcane Device (Moonlee)
This is one head melting fucker of an album that will pound and pound in your cranium like never before for the entire 9 tracks over 45 minutes. Actually I firmly believe that this can not be listened to in one complete go. This is demented like a mix of Neurosis meeting Today Is The Day with maybe a hint of Eye Hate God just to fuck things up totally. But don't compare this too much to that, just check out how heavy, demented and experimental this lot really are. I assure you your head will be mashed good and proper. Not one for the light headed or pop kind of lovers. Pure evil heads need only apply.
PETE.

Chron Gen- Chronic Generation (Captain Oi!)
Can't believe it's taken this long to get this classic back in the hands of the kids. And of course Captain Oi overdo themselves by slapping the great singles for the album on as well. While in the early 80's America was defing itself as hardcore, I have to admit I was ignoring what was hapening in the English scene. However, I could not escape Chron Gen, and I doubt many could. Brilliant progression for where punk was heading, and strangely commerical at the time. Man, this sounds better than ever (although the start of "L.S.D." leads me to believe the music was lifted from a vinyl source and not the original tapes). A great soundtrack for drinking and being bored.
Chris Shary

Coal Chamber - Coal Chamber (Roadrunner)

So Roadrunner are re-releasing some greats over the past few months and years (2 from the vault series etc.) and here's one of the latest - Coal Chamber. The debut album gets a digi-pack make over, 5 bonus tracks (demo's and remixes), a history kind of thing with questions answered by the band and a DVD disc which features 2 live concerts, the Loco video and Loco live from the 1996 Ozzfest. These were one of the new breeds of metal acts that Roadrunner were pushing out at the time and one that I must say I liked one or 2 of their songs (Loco, Sway and Big Truck to name a few) and this band needs no introduction as it is well known all over. Great re-release if you wanted to finally get this (with bonus DVD) or to replace the one you got rid of a few years ago (like me).

PETE.

Cretin – Freakery (Relapse Records)

With a album title like "Freakery" I have to think about a band going in the Dillinger Escape Plan or Converge direction. This is definitely not the case as Cretin are totally turning back the clock to the 80s, when noone would ever think of linking math and core together. "Freakery" could best be described as 80s hardcore having gone through a violent grind metamorphosis, names like SOD and Nuclear Assault came to mind, covered by an avalanche of lethal grind having a primitive Napalm Death / Terrorizer feel too it, with some primordial semi-improvised Slayer solos. Faster than our chief editor Tim would run, while being chased by emo kids, trying to hug him. Like a machine gun blastbeats are fired at us, and make no mistake, they are here to kill. Martijn Welzen

Deadlock – Earth Revolt (Lifeforce)

I remember seeing this German quintet a while ago and reviewed their split CD they did on Winter Recordings with Six Reasons To Kill. Vegan straightedge followers who deliver a solid and pounding atmospheric, melodic and metallic metalcore at its finest that is not to be missed. Great keyboard and female vocal sections really enhance this album with it's catchy guitars riffing their way through it (check out 10,000 Generations In Blood for this example). Maybe the best way to describe them is a cross between Dimmu Bogir and a slightly stripped down version of Cradle Of Filth. Nice stuff and one I shall be listening to quite a bit.

PETE.

Deadsoil - Sacrifice (Lifeforce)

Deadsoil rule and this is based on a previous interview we have done with them and after seeing them recently on the Black Dahlia Murder tour. One major pounding, crushing machine that left me wide eyed in awe after their set. Quite a diverse release this. Still has the crushing hardcore tinged pounding metal of the likes of Hatesphere, or Dewscented and even tips towards say Hatebreed but there are some more driving melodic sections (Unspoken as a good example) where his voice reminds me of Zoli from Ignite, and then you are hit with the metal. Viper is bruising, Forget Everything starts off like Pantera and has a sweet beat down in the middle too. This is one record to check out for definite this year.

PETE.

Don Caballero – World Class Listening Problem (Relapse)

By all accounts these are legendary and this album has been 5 years in the waiting. Personally I have never heard of them and after listening to this I am kicking myself as to why not. The quartet hail from Pittsburgh and can, to some extent be compared to sounding like Dysrhythmia (their label mates) with their charismatic form of instrumental prog metal, avant-jazz etc and are just as mesmerizing and enchanting as their label mates. I can't believe that I have never heard these before or this kind of great craftsmanship. Has a great Fugazi, Shellac and other greats feel to it. I loved Sure We Had Knifes Around, Palm Trees In The Fucking Bahamas and the opener Mm-mmm Acting, I Love Some Good Acting. Awesome stuff and one you should be trying out for yourself.

PETE.

Fightstar – They Liked You Better When You Were Dead (Deep Elm)

Let's face it, there's a million things I could say about this band, making the ex-Busted connection, levelling all the same kind of accusations that a thousand other people in the scene have already, but what would be the point? None of it says anything about the band, their music or the record. So, okay, the singer was in Busted, and yeah, he made a mint playing pop music, but do you have any idea how big your balls have to be to walk away from that? To walk away from the money, the adulation and all that goes with it? But he'd already made enough money blah, blah, blah to retire on...Are you sure? I'm not denying that the guy had a comfort zone that most of us will never have, but what's important? What he's already done, or what he's doing and will do? Imagine the number of kids that he could single handedly bring into the scene, just by association with his former career? Imagine how many records by underground bands those kids might buy, and imagine for a second that by buying those records, those kids might be able to help a couple of bands support themselves solely by playing music. Just a few morsels for you to chew on before you start jumping all over the guy…Fightstar. Musically, I guess it's nothing I haven't heard before, sort of like Muse meets Understand with pop hooks and big choruses. "They Liked You…" isn't going to change the world, but for what it is, essentially a pop record with guitars, it's pretty good, and I guess I'll spend more than a few hours spinning this record…

Tim Mass Movement

For Those Lost – This Is Our Fight (Engineer)
Now, Engineer records that I have reviewed in the recent past have been a bit too melodic post hardcore for my taste but this one has a bit more fire in its arse. I can hear hints of Sick Of It All (minutely), The Banner, The Bronx (in small places) and maybe slices of Eden Maine and Strife etc. This was much heavier and full throttle than expected as I said but this was a great metallic hardcore release with some nice melodies littered through the tracks. Could do worse than this I can assure you.
PETE.

Frantic Bleep - The Sense Apparatus (Earache Records)
Jesus this is a bit deep, takes you from almost "stoner" to almost Vinnie Moore widdle guitar hero stuff, to riffing that wouldn't be out of place on a Machine Head album. This is like progressive techie metal that's described as "Avant-garde", for me you can't fault the playing of this album, these are amazing musicians, they craft there music beyond what is the norm, but this is musical masturbation, only the ones having the wank will really enjoy it..... if that makes sense, and I don't mean that in a nasty way, but you really have want to listen to this, it is a very intense album, well crafted and played to an incredible standard, but leaves me cold.
Carl Arnfield

Gadget – The Funeral March (Relapse Records)
Usually grindcore is not really the type of music you would think of as groovy, but that's just the aspect which makes Swedish Gadget stand out with their second full length "The Funeral March". Don't expect it to have a groove you can dance to, as it still is grind after all, but having ex members of Dismember in the line up must have brought some sinister deathmetal influences to the sound, reminding me of Gorefest's "False" at times. I like this band for that reason, as I love the old Swedish sound, bands like Grave, Entombed and the aforementioned Dismember made big. Grind takes that whole sound from the mid eighties when it came into being, screaming into the new millennium, at time where this whole world seems to be spinning out of control. Which also shows through in the lyrics of which "H5N1" is a prime example. Gadget made sure however their record is just marching on to the end of this cursed world in a steady pace. Lightning fast, but as tight as they come. This is the orchestra that will keep on playing as our planet has hit that proverbial iceberg which will lead us to our doom.
Martijn Welzen

Hard Skin – Same Meat, Different Gravy (TKO)
Hard Skin, they're one of those bands that I've heard nothing but good things about, but for some reason I've never got around to checking them out, so it's finally time to take the plunge…Oh man this is great, a traditional skinhead / Oi band playing it for laughs, making fun of every single facet of the skinhead scene that people get the hump with. Yeah, I get the feeling that there's an element of "the joke" to this band, but what the hell, it's all good, and funny as hell. I defy anyone to listen to this record and not have a good time…Bloody great!
Tim Mass Movement

Herod - Rich Man's War... Poor Man's Fight (Lifeforce Records)
I would like to say this slab of solid American powermetal is a must have, but I am tripping over the vocals. Singer Jason Russo, is close to a mixture of Joey Belladonna (Anthrax) and Rob Halford (Judas Priest), but is too restless with many songs. He can get the high notes, but his voice is just stretched to thin if needed to reach the stratossphere, as if he's just out of breath. Too bad as the music is just excellent going from that Iron Maiden galloping sound to superb guitarduals to over the top speedmetal resembling old Anthrax.
Even huge stadium rock from the likes of Van Halen or Def Leppard give them more body. This band has all to become a major force of metal, if only the singer would be able to give power even at extreme heigths.
Martijn Welzen

Hurtlocker – Fear in a Handful of Dust (Napalm Records)
Opening track "Symtomps" has thrown me on the floor, with killer blast beats and Strapping Young Lad like insanity. Things are heading up my alley of metal a bit more from "Absolution" onwards, a mixture of deathmetal, thrashmetal and metalcore is seeping from your speakers. What makes this band just that bit more special among all metalcore bands would be they mix the Haunted and Heaven Shall Burn like metal(core) with such intense drumming even that guy from Suffocation would tip his hat. Slayer like solos and riffs chop of the heads of those who still do not believe the power of this band. The energy is just not letting up, more adrenaline per second than any man can handle. And to make it even more lethal this Chicago outfit must have thought producer Zeus (Shadows Fall, Hatebreed) would be needed to bring the message of metal across. They have succeeded in making it intense and insane. Hurtlocker are the next step in this new wave of American metal, a much more extreme step I might add.
Martijn Welzen

I Farm – IV (Go Kart Records)
Surprisingly, not a Wurzels covers band, but a rather noisy bunch of gents who approach their music making as a rough approximation of what would happen if Paw and Tad's tour buses crashed and the survivors formed a hardcore band. Discordant at times ala Hot Water

Music. All told a pretty blooming good record and a sound which is hard to pigeonhole. All good.
Eddie Thomas wasn't on drugs when he wrote this.

Isle Of Man - Breathe Plastic (Garden Of Exile)
Five piece I understand hailing from Netherlands bring us an MCD through a label I have never heard of (may be a new one seeing as the catalogue number is 001) who offer us 5 tracks of death grind that is just as chaotic and mind blowing as Dillinger Escape Plan, Cephalic Carnage, The Red Chord, Cryptopsy and maybe even a bit of Pig Destroyer thrown in for luck and good measure. Surprised Relapse or someone like that didn't pick these up but who knows what the future brings. If you love death grind ala the above bands then this is for you.
PETE.

Job For A Cowboy – Doom (King of the Monsters Records)
What has been going on in these guys lives, to get this exteme music onto a cd? At the time this ep is out to make some innocent victims these guys are still in high school. Well, on the metallevel they have passed any school and course one might enter and then some. Try to cross Swedish deathmetal with some Napalm Death, add some ZAO insanity to that and have your singer bend his vocals in ways not even a bungy jump chord would after a cow would have been launched with it from a skyscraper. Blast beats and killer riffs are our part on this 6 track ep. To be honest I am exhausted every single time, after having given "Doom" a spin. Strong stuff indeed, this will grow hair on your chest. Wouldn't mind seeing them on some stage around here soon.
Martijn Welzen

Kelly Stoltz – Below The Branches (Sub Pop)
Kelly Stoltz is something of a hometown musician for me, coming from San Francisco, which is where I go for shows, culture, record-shopping, etc. Unfortunately for me, I learned this fact after he dropped this album on Sub Pop so getting a chance to see him perform live will not be as easy or as intimate as it must have been awhile back. Stoltz could gain a legion of fans with this release, if people are able to hear it. He is a multi-instrumentalist and a fantastic vocalist, and he's crafted an album that honestly has the feel, to me, of Pink Floyd and The Beatles recording together (in their glory days), with friends of all periods dropping in to assist. Flashes of Elliott Smith, Afghan Whigs, Roky Erickson, maybe even Foo Fighters, combine to form an album that is lush and orchestral, yet still completely warm, natural, and full of soul. I love this guy's voice most of all—it evokes so much passion that I continually find myself staring at the speakers as if I am going to be able to see him, or something, somehow. I highly recommend this album to anyone who wants to hear great songs performed by a great musician. Simple as that.
The Impaler

Krisium – AssassiNation (Century Media)
It's Death Metal they hail from Brazil and they fucking rule. Oh yes im not over reacting on this one, these guys are awesome. If you like pounding drums and blazing twin guitars then you need this. 12 tracks of what can only be described as technical death metal will leave you itching for more and due to the bands extensive back catalogue you can easily get it.
Bunky

Let It Die – Stick to Your Guns (Stilllife Records)
This is too weird. I have just put "Stick To Your Guns" in my cd player and I'm humming parts from Throwdown songs along. What else do you need to know about an influence? It's a band preaching the never-ending mosh, and a brutal way for the members to get their aggression out. And even though with this overwhelming Throwdown and Terror influx I like this disc as it sounds "real". Hailing from Detroit, and formed in 2003 there seem to be former members of the metal band The Black Dahlia Murder pushing the term heavy to the limits. There's no comparison what so ever to be made musically. This is a wild beast of a record, so get it to practice your moves.
Martijn Welzen

Litterbug – Speaking Through The Gaps (JSNTGM)
This is nothing like what you would expect from JSNTGM to be perfectly honest and something I think they should not look at again. Hailed as the best thing to come from Blackpool since Section 25 (I find that hard to believe) what we have here is 7 tracks of alternative indie rock with a mix of normal male and high pitched warbling female vocals over the top which sounds a bit like early Sonic Youth and Pavement maybe but not quite that good. Not one I would strongly recommend I'm afraid.
PETE.

Massive Assault - Conflict EP (Crash Landing Records)
This is great! A couple of Dutch guys reliving the old days of grooving Swedish deathmetal, in the vein of (old) Entombed and Dismember. Nothing more nothing less... not original in anyway, but done with such conviction and aggression the blood is being pumped out of your speakers as is would from a ruptured aorta. Solid deathmetal forged by the fires of hell into four lethal songs. I love it.
Martijn Welzen

Matchbox Romance – Voices (Epitaph)
Slick and professional emotional rock is the order of the day here. Suffice to say, it sounds huge and will appeal to hordes of your kids

with styled side-parting hair-dos but it's all just a bit too nice and too rock for us older punk rockers. They kinda sound like Muse meets Taking Back Sunday or something. Yeah, it's good for what it is but what it is ain't good enough for me.
James Sherry

Me Versus The Monster – The Resurrectionist (Show Of Hands)
With an in your face mix of scremo, punk rock and the 90s discord sound, Me Versus The Monster blast through six tracks with gusto. The three piece are tight. pulsating and uncompromising. Vocally the screams almost veer towards Jello Biafra and Brian Molko. Now there's a combination. Not for the faint hearted, but worth a listen.
Richard Robinson

Nazi Dogs – Chase The Man (TKO)
I really was a bit unnerved when I saw the name of this band. It didn't really convince me that I was about to review something sound. I'm still not totally decided 100% but it's not too bad on the whole. Sounds a bit like Sex Pistols (the best stuff) or early G.G. Allin along with other early UK punk feel to it. Still trying to fully make my mind up on it and the more I listen to it the better it gets. I think it's one of those growers, you know, the more you listen, the better it gets? Interesting release from a band I previously knew nothing about.
PETE.

NFD – Light My Way (Jungle)
I put off listening to NFD for as long as humanly possible. The artwork, font, everything just screamed, 'bad Sepultura!' So, you understand my trepidation. But just as the old adage says about judging and covers and all that, it's actually pretty good. It doesn't sound like a nod to the gothic 80s, it sounds exactly like the gothic 80s, with The Mission's guitars and the Sisters Of Mercy's vocals. If Interpol and The Editors don't smell of enough petulie oil for your liking, NFD might be worth a bash.
Richard Robinson

No Dice – Suffer – 7" Vinyl (625 Thrashcore)
More brain mashing music from Mr. Ward and this time it's in the form of No Dice. This is fast as fucking hell and obliterates anything else out there to be honest. If Infest or Crossed out are you're bag then so is this. The 4 tracks just rage and blast like nothing else on this planet. Also reminds me a bit like ETA and Bruce Banner but that's just me. Either way this is a must for you all.
PETE.

No Turning Back – Rise From The Ashes – 7" Vinyl (Not Just Words)
More great vinyl from Not Just Words and this time it's the turn of No Turning Back from Holland who are nothing short of amazing. Sounding like Early Cro-Mags, Sick Of It All and Madball in my humble opinion you really couldn't ask for a better mixture of sound to be compared to really can you? Well you could but then you would just be being greedy and that's not on. Anyway, this is another great release from both the NJW label and NTB the band. Get it is all I need to add to this.
PETE.

On Fire - Truckstop Armageddon (Shield Recordings)
If this band would have had just a bit more budget to spend they'd be blasting things apart. Their old school hardcore with some decent influences from Sick of it All or resemblances to fellow Dutch band Violation of Trust, can rock many a party. The punkrock, melodic guitarparts and beer drinking anthems brought by two singers will make sure of that. I also know these guys are huge Iron Maiden fans, and even this shines through, just listen to "Hell, The Devil and How to Sell Your Soul" for just one of many examples, and not to forget parts of "Black Rain" are just stolen from Maiden's "Gangland". Nowhere this band will claim to be renewing the scene; but it's just a bunch for friendly guys having a great time being in a band, playing the music they like. And at the end of things having a good time bringing their joy to you. Decent album for sure, and where do you get to hear a mixture of New York hardcore with the metal gods Iron Maiden?
Martijn Welzen

Porch Mob – Can Of Worms (Can Of Worms Records)
Thnak heaven and hell for small mercies, the universal guardian of retro – eighties bands that this landed here, and it landed now. Bloody great, full throttle mid eighties USHC with dash or two of DC, some new wave flourishes, and mid eighties "indie" influences thrown in for good measure. My only beef with this release, is that five studio tracks just ain't enough (even if one of the does feature regular Mass Movement group therapy cheerleader, John Stabb), although it kind of makes up for it with five live tracks, including a kick ass version of "At The Movies" …I'm left wanting more, and that's never a bad thing. Roll on the next record, I can't wait…
Tim Mass Movement

Protest the Hero- Kezia (Vagrant Records)
Crazy assed guitar noodling appear all ove rthis album. Sure it's slick and heavy, and all, but it's jumping all ove rthe map from super fast 80's hair metal to screamo, to early Metallica.Obviously this guys were all in band in high school, and probably attended the same Sunday school. Should I be confused or affaid that Christians are trying to rock harder than Stryper these days? I don't get it. Maybe Jesus is giving them the thumbs up.
Chris Shary

Purified In Blood - Reaper Of Souls (Alveran)
This is a name I've heard thrown about a bit as of late so was a bit curious to hear them and here's my great chance as I get the new album for review from this sextet metal outfit hailing from Stavanger, Norway. For a band that started as close back as 2003 (only going 3 years) they seem to have perfected a mature and ripping metal sound that on first listen reminded me of Slayer having evil doings with 3 Inches Of Blood and Kreator. This is thrashtastic and when you have a singer calling himself Glenn Reaper then what more can you ask for? There is still a nice hardcore feel to it as well but it reigns far supreme over some of the metalcore that is about persecuting our ears these days. Check this album out is all I can say especially Unmarked Graves, Venom, Skulltwister and.... oh fuck it the whole thing will tear you a new one so just see for yourself.
PETE.

Sick of it All - Just Look Around picture disc (Street Justice Records)
Sick of it All - Blood, Sweat and No Tears picture disc (Street Justice Records)
As was made clear with the release of Agnostic Fronts "To Be Continued" on a limited edition picture disc, Street Justice is making it a series of classics for all collector freaks out there. What I have here are not just issues two and three in this series, but also two of the best Sick of it All albums on great looking picture discs. As with all Street Justice releases, limited to fivehundred, handnumbered! copies, with cover, lyrics and all to make it as complete as possible. Legendary stuff indeed, get your fix. And please do not fall into that trap called Ebay where shady sellers ask half your years income for these. Head on over to www.streetjusticerecords.de and get these for a very good, and more importantly, fair price. You need to be very fast though as was to be expected.
Martijn Welzen

Slapshot - Greatest Hits, Slashes and Crosschecks picture disc (Street Justice Records)
Right; with number four of the highly collectible picture disc series this small German label is putting out there's something different. Slapshot's "best of" record has already been put out by Street Justice in 2003 on transparent vinyl (500 copies), so the surprise it not in the great looking cover which only has now the line "Strictly Limited Picture Vinyl Edition" on it, no the surprise is inside it's cover, and inside the dust sleeve which now has the lyrics which weren't included in the first edition. The picture disc is the real jewel here. Great looking with a Slapshot logo on one side and covers of legendary records on the other side. Keep them classics coming my friends.
Martijn Welzen

Smoking Popes – At Metro (Victory)
Strange things happen when you least expect them to – like the fact that I never thought I'd see The Smoking Popes return, let alone on Victory with a CD / DVD double set recorded at their first show in seven years. Yeah, it's odd, but it's not strange I hear ya say, but here's where the strange thing really kicks in – day after I had a Smoking Popes marathon, playing nothing but the band in question, I awake to find this release on my doormat. Coincidence, or the just the universe fucking with me? Does it matter? Just be thankful for what you've got and move on…I always thought that The Smoking Popes were America's answer to The Smiths and all the copycat bands that followed Morriseys crew, except the Pope's knew (and still know) how to rock hard and lay down the tunes with some serious guitar work and emotion. Bloody great to hear these guys back in action – now how's about some UK shows? Oh yeah, the sound quality on "At Metro" – incredible, and if as I suspect the studio trickery has been kept to a minimum, then it's just another reason to make a pilgrimage to see The Popes…
Tim Mass Movement

Spermbirds – Common Thread (Boss Tuneage / Rookie Records)
– Alos available as limited edition picture disc
Ah, the Spermbirds re-issues continue, and thus, I smile, for true happiness is magnified ten fold by any release from Germany's finest punk rock sons. I'm always going to maintain that the Spermbirds are one of, if not the best, live band I've ever seen, they literally blew the place apart…"Common Thread" also happens to be one of my favourite Spermbirds records, featuring the all time classics "Only A Phase" and "Open Letter", and as such…ah, fuck it, it's the Spermbirds, you know that I'm going to tell you that if you don't own at least one record by this band you're seriously mentally deficient, a miserable excuse of an "emo" kid playing at punk rock, or eve worse a combination of both. Are you panty waste or punk? Right…well, time to grab your wallet then…
Tim Mass Movement

Spermbirds – Eating Glass (Boss Tuneage / Rookie) – Alos available as super limited picture disc!
Look, just check out the previous review, except the album has a different name, and you also get the "Joe" EP tacked on to the end of the album as a bonus! How stupid would you have to be to miss out on these releases? I couldn't even begin to comprehend the level of idiocy someone would have to be suffering from if they missed out (an IQ akin to that of the average Kerrang reader, or Nu-Metal kid I reckon) on not only one, but both of these records…
Tim Mass Movement

The Autumn Offering - Revelations Of The Unsung (Victory)

Daytona Beach quintet re-release their debut release (originally out on Stillborn Records in 2004) on Victory before they unleash their new album as a taster for people to get used to the name beforehand. To a certain extent there is nothing more than generic metalcore here (that a few reputable labels seem to be sticking to as a safety net in business) along with the predictable melodic and beat down sections but there are moments where they have structured something that makes you sit up and listen. On the whole worth a listen to see if you like them but I want to hear the new one to see if they invented new sounds rather than, what seems to me, to be something that doesn't stand out above the metalcore market.
PETE.

The Break In - Unbowed (In At The Deep End Records)
An English metalcore band doing it the American way. And with the American way I mean the evilness of bands like Integrity, Ringworm combined with the in your face attitude with massive breakdowns from bands like Terror or Hatebreed. The band has already done so on their previous releases, but got an even better grip on things this time around. But before tossing them into that drawer which has the label "copycat", you need to know this band it so amazingly tight, I'd have to tip my head for the drummer, if I was wearing hat that is. And the vocalist has that nasty, evil thing going on making is a mixture of Kreator, Liar and Send More Paramedics, which also makes them stand out. And it really fits the lyrics well, it's not tough, or rooted in hellish grunts, but they are the screams of a madman.
Martijn Welzen

The Ruts – The Punk Singles Collection (Captain Oi!)
Ah, the release I've been hoping that Captain Oi! Would eventually get around to doing – a Ruts single collection. One of those bands that I remember hearing on the radio when I was but a nipper (yeah, old as I am, even I'm not old enough to remember the Ruts in their prime), and they just kind of stuck with me…For me, there were only three UK bands worth bothering with, The Clash, The Stiff Little Fingers and The Ruts, and the songs sound as good today as they ever did. So what if this stuff has been available elsewhere and I've already got it? The reggae, punk fusion still sounds incredible, and I've always wondered, if Malcolm Owen hadn't died, just how big these guys could have been…
Tim Mass Movement

The Slackers - Peculiar (Hellcat)
I love this band already for one simple reason, before even one chord has been played. They are from New York city, a huge metropolitan of which many people say it's the capital of the world for modern art, music and culture. And what do these guys do to get down to the core of their music, to look for desperately needed inspiration? They leave that city and come to Sittard (the Netherlands); a nice little town about half an hour drive south from where I am currently residing. At a place called Ernesto's they have laid down the rhythm that formed the grooving foundation for "Peculiar". The other tracks, horns, vocals etc have been recorded in the studio, but that great natural sounding vibe remains. I have to say this The Slackers cd, with that familair reggae / ska mix is by far the best I have heard from them. It's the feeling that all bandmembers are comfortable and relaxed with what they are doing. That skanking groove it grows and grows like a plant, with beautiful green leaves having a decent THC concentration I am sure.
Martijn Welzen

The sWord – S/T (Clean it up)
Anyone Remember Joe 90? (the band) well this is what happened to the other half of the band….and im glad it did. This is Melodic Punk Rock the way it should be and it's good to see, with the world obsessed with this emo shit it's a blessing to hear something with a melody that you don't have to be ashamed of, check it out.
Bunky

The Twilight Transmission – The Dance Of Destruction (Revelation)
Dreadful whiney emo rock. This means nothing to me. Oh Vienna.
James Sherry

The Vacancies – A Beat Missing Or A Silence Added (Blackheart)
This is a breath of fresh air in a somewhat stale punk rock scene with little coming out to impress me on the whole but I did like this. Cleveland, Ohio has spawned a great catchy up beat punk rock quartet in these guys and you can't help but sing along to every damn song. The opener Children Of The Century pick you up onto your feet and doesn't let you go till the end of L.F.D.Y. Early AFI, Kid Dynamite and The Bronx fans I feel are going to like this but hey, why not everyone check it out as this truly is a great slab of punk rock wholesome goodness.
PETE.

Tommy & The Terrors – Unleash The Fury (TKO)
This is how street punk, Oi, call it, what you will should sound, all sing-a-longs, musically catchy and powered by a sense of righteous fury and humour, that races along ad is over much too soon. Just when you're really getting into it, the whole thing finishes, and as ya go back to the beginning and star it all over again, press play and away you go. I've been sucked into this vicious circle by Tommy & The Terrors, but you know what? I don't give a fuck. There are worse ways to go, and worse things to get hooked than damn fine rock-n-roll, and at least I'm gonna go with a smile on my face after spending the day listening to "Unleash The Fury"…
Tim Mass Movement

Turn The Screw – S/T 7" (Not Just Words)
Talk about a feast for the fallen…fast as hell old school USHC (and we ain't talking any of that xSxEx stuff either) from Belgium who take the best bits of Negative Approach and mix 'em up with Direct Control and Dead Stop to create a beautiful eighties fusion dragged kicking and screaming into the twenty first century without any of the usual baggage that today's bands seem hell bent on carrying. Remember kids, counter clockwise, and you're set…
Tim Mass Movement

Unearthly Trance – The Trident (Relapse)
Nice to start getting some Relapse releases here at Mass Movement and I have the honor with this Long Island / Brooklyn trio. When you see that they have had releases on Southern Lord and Rise Above previously then I think you know what treat you are in for. Yes, you got it, awesome doom sludge that will beat you into submission. This really did remind me of a wicked blend of Neurosis, High On Fire, Khanate and a pinch of His Hero Is Gone. Maybe in some places a hint of Electric Wizard too for good measure and this is one disc that doom sludge fans should be picking up. It's really nice to hear something different that I usually hear from the Relapse roster.
PETE.

Valdez – Exception Becomes The Rule (Cider City)
This is pretty ropey to be honest. Below average punk rock with gruff vocals, a terrible drummer and songs that just about hinge together. Valdez just don't have that spark of energy and excitement that makes good punk rock the best kind of music in the world, ever. Why settle for anything less?
James Sherry

Walls Of Jericho – A Day And A Thousand Years (Genet)
Having witnessed this lot live, and seen first hand the carnage they leave in their wake having whipped up the storm, and abandoned the idea that there's an eye in the hurricane, or a moment of respite, I'm all for this record. A study in vicious metal core with the most evil female vocals this side of Arch Enemy, "A Day…" comes with a double thumbs up, Mass Movement guaranteed seal of approval. And you can take that to the motherfucking bank…
Tim Mass Movement

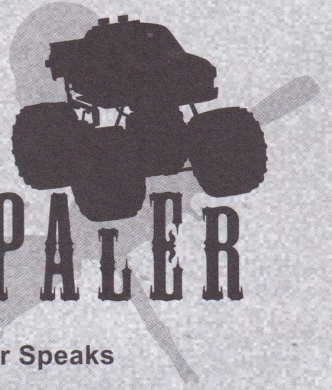
We're All Broken – Ambrosia – 7" Colour Vinyl (Engineer)
Pressed on a goldy brown with green splattered slab of vinyl comes this 3 track release from this very melodic hardcore outfit. This is enjoyable stuff that has hints of Glassjaw, Underoath and maybe Static Lullaby. A little bit too mellow for my personal enjoyment but I can appreciate what they are doing and know that people out there are going to love this.
PETE.

When Gravity Fails – S/T (Astr:Nought Recordings)
Musically I was really digging this record, all seventies, heavy rolling riffs and solid stone grooves, until the singer opened his mouth and I stared having visions of Eddie Vedder and every other so-called Grunge singer fronting and ruining the next wave of stoner bands and that's when things started to go South, and continued to do so for the remainder of the record. So close and yet so far…
Tim Mass Movement

WWIII – When God Turned Away (Reality Entertainment)
Anyone already familiar with WWIII will know pretty much what you're getting here. For the uninitiated, it's old-school metal (think Dio) meets stoner metal (think Cathedral) with the drums set to stomp and the shoutalong factor on 11. Almost like Danzig might had been if they had been less rock and more metal. "When God Turned Away" is a typically excellent example of their work, and if that's what floats your boat, buy with confidence.
Eddie Thomas is a weatherman and so is Michael Fish.

Zyklon - Disintegrate (Candlelight)
This is a name I haven't heard in the world of metal for a few years and surprised they are still going. Never really a fan sadly and this one was good after I found out that it featured an ex member of emperor so I gave it a hearty listen. A very well honed and polished sounding death metal release with music I expected to have high pitched squeals rather that the deep guttural grunts bestowed. A good solid release but one I feel will be overclouded by the already stand fast releases from Decapitated, Krisiun and Cannibal Corpse. Sorry but worth checking out if you like this sort of stuff.
PETE.

The IMPALER



The Impaler Speaks

The sky is falling.

No, I'm serious. Chicken Little would be freaking out if he were here today, especially if "here" is the good old USA, where I am right now. I think the goddam sky is really falling. Of course, that is I think the allegory of the sky falling is appropriate for the current state of things. Let's do the list: the absolute worst excuse for a leader in the entire history of the world (yeah, that'd be Dubya); the never-ending war that whitey is waging on the entire Islamic world; the never-ending war that the entire Islamic world is waging on whitey; all these fucking hurricanes and earthquakes and fires and floods—getting worse as global warming speeds up; so many of our musical heroes in the worlds of metal and punk and rock and blues dying before their time; a small faction of insane religious freaks taking over the entire judicial system over here; and so on. You don't think the sky is falling? Maybe it's Judgment Day in your vernacular. Armageddon? The End Times? Call it what you will. It's not pretty.

The sky is falling.

America, as a nation, is bankrupt. Morally bankrupt? Sure, but that's been the case since the innocence died (for the record, on the day the USA got involved in the Korean War, um, "Conflict"). Who cares about someone else's ideas about morals? I'm talking about the one thing that affects all of us, whether we claim to like it or loathe it: money. Yeah, America is bankrupt. At the end of the last president's time in office, America was in its best fiduciary position ever. EVER. In the entire 230-odd year history of the country. Within the first year of the current president's reign, America had already reached its absolute WORST fiduciary position ever. In my eyes, this is called "a signal that something not-quite-right is afoot." So we are about to see another Depression in this country, perhaps. Inflation is definitely affecting us all. It's getting harder and harder to just live a normal, poor-ass life as a 9-to-5'er in this country. And that's on top of the constant awareness we have developed of trying to pretend that half the world doesn't really want us dead because of where we were born and/or live today.

The sky is falling.

My life, over the past 12 months, has been a trial. A test that could have been designed by God. And I am talking about GOD here—the real deal, full-on evil as shit Old Testament God. The motherfucker that made brothers kill brothers, that made entire races wander the desert for several fortnights, that made that one dude go crazy and build a huge floating zoo while everyone else was killed in a flood. That bastard. Look, I'm no dummy. The divorce was a long time coming. I completely realize (with hindsight being the perfect thing that it is) that I should have made the move six years ago. Ten years is too long to be with one person anyway. There should be a fucking moratorium of 6 weeks for any relationship; fuck 'em if they can't take a joke. Still, it caused me all sorts of grief—most notably in my bank account, which was emptied, and will possibly never have anything in it again thanks to all the debt I'm stuck with. So forget all of that. How about my car? Okay, new car, four more years of payments to go, nice and shiny, 2005 model. Doing good, eh? Oh, two windows vandalized (smashed), one mirror vandalized (broken right off of there), two rear-enders, and one sideswipe. Two of the last three are estimated at over three thousand dollars worth of repairs. If I got into my goddam medical problems, my whole "the sky is falling" thing would make a lot more sense. But I won't. Suffice it to say, MY sky has been falling for the past 12 months or so.

The sky is falling.

And the losses we have suffered, all of us, in collective ways and in individual ways. All of us have lost friends and or family over the past year. Someone. And all of us have lost musical heroes. Dimebag Darrell Abbott. Piggy from Voivod. My friend Ian Anderson here in Nevada. R.L. Burnside. Two ex-members of Soilent Green. Fuck, I can't do a massive list here. It is just too damn much. I know this much: it's been an unusually harsh year in this regard.

Fuck the sky.

You know, I am not going for the Goth-styled gloom and doom pessimism here. Far from it. It's not like I'm advocating a mass suicide (well, maybe for the religious nuts; fuck those assholes… and that means EVERY religion… and that means YOURS, asshole). We've got plenty of good things going on here. Mass Movement is all pretty and glossy and shit now. Your editor Tim is [censored by editor] and that's not to mention [censored by editor] with TWO squirrels! That fuckin' guy! Lots of great new albums out there right now. I am currently enjoying the hell out of releases from probably 20 artists—and that kind of percentage hasn't occurred in many a year, my friends. So it's not all bad. As for the sky, and what to do about it falling on our heads… I recommend the same solution that I have for problems with women (besides staying the hell away from them) and drugs (besides staying the hell away from them) and money (besides staying the hell away from it). Fuck it.

Funeral for a Friend

Well, I guess you'd have to have been living under a rock if you don't know who these guys are…So, without further ado, here's Matt, old Mass Movement columnist and FFAF singer…
Interview by Emma

MM: Tell me about the new album. What influence, if any, did the record company's strategies for the band have on the development of the Funeral for a friend sound?

Matt: None to be honest, we've always been left to our own devices when it comes to our music which I guess is kind of rare in the grand scheme of the record industry. Sometimes people will have ideas but we're such tough critics of our own sound and writing that it's never really considered. People always have the idea of record labels meddling with your songs and sometimes that does happen in the music world but with us we're stubborn as hell and know exactly what we want and how we want our music to sound so we stick up for it at any cost even if a certain track is singles out for a single but needs to be edited...we'd say 'fuck you' release it as it is and they usually either give up or we refuse to release it was a single.

MM: How do you feel about the attention you now attract from media and other musicians? How has it changed you?
Matt: I think it's made realise just how good your real friends are, media attraction is nothing more than a phase, I mean, next week it will be somebody else so I've learnt not to hold much stead in it at all. Getting credited by other musicians is far more rewarding though because they're going through the same thing, they writer music and understand on a level that not many other people can. if it's changed me I think it's taught me to respect the privilege I have and the opportunity that has been presented to the band and what we can achieve through that platform, I do not want to abuse it in anyway but I'm still as shy around people as I was five years ago.

MM: Tell me about Monk Dave..

Matt: isn't that the name of some horrible slimy vegetable that has no taste and a slimy consistency....hmmm, I believe it is. Oh, he's also a sad man who likes throwing stones in glass houses.

MM: How did the chaps at Sanctuary help prepare, polish and present a young aggressive band from South Wales into one capable of attracting enormous attention, a massive female fan base and, with the second album, take on the huge US market?

Matt: Ummm, they just told us to go out and play I guess. We've toured a hell of a lot and that gets you some attention, they've attracted magazines to the band that I guess get our faces out there, not that tit really matters but they've also helped spread our music to a wider audience through very good marketing ideas and with the help of our label helped us to achieve two top

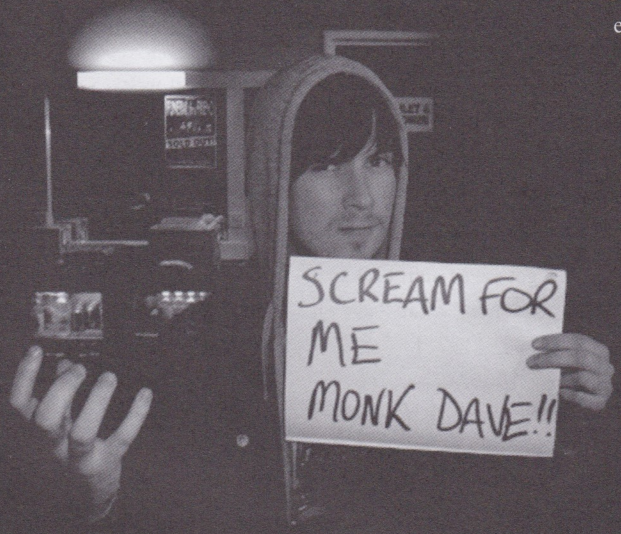
20 albums which is damn good work...but we do most of it to be honest! Ha, ha!

MM: What effect did your illness have on your ideas about life, love and the music industry, do you think it was exacerbated by them?

Matt: it made me realise just how small we are, that we're not infallible and that stress and pressure can take it's toll no matter what, I was humbled by it and learnt to take things easy and not to push myself past my physical boundaries. Love is always hard in this business, when you're away for such a long period of time it can effect relationships, strain them and kill them. if you're lucky enough to find someone who understands the rigours of what you do and what being in a touring band entails then that rare, I think I've found someone who is that for me and it's made me happy on both ends of the spectrum.

MM: How do you feel about the mixed reactions and petty jealousies from the folks in the home scene? What do you have to say to/about those who felt put out by your success and felt that you owed/ or had promised them some part of it?

Matt: You feel kind of sad that some people you considered friends did such an about turn, we were criticised and in return criticised the home scene, I mean we were hurt and we lashed out at the whole hardcore scene in general purely out of reflex, some things were said by us as a band in regards to the UK hardcore/DIY scene that I don't entirely stand with anymore and I'm sure some people will read this and say that I'm just trying to back track but again, those people I feel will always remain closed minded to anything other than hardcore. At the end of the day, I'm happy writing music that I like and I'm happy in my life to that's really all I need.


SCREAM FOR ME MONK DAVE!!

MM: Do you miss the heady days of Third Engine?

Matt: I guess I kind of do. I mean, I was reading some old issues the other day and realised just how terrible it was but it was a hell of a lot of fun to do and there was defiantly a sense of achievement when I did it but I think it's best left where it is, in the memories and hearts of those who actually enjoyed reading it.

MM: What, precisely was wrong with Benny Wong?, Why wasn't there time for a shit and what exactly does Kay do to Steve's potatoes?

Matt: I'm not quite sure what is wrong with Uncle Benny but I'll ask, as for the shit...there's never enough time for one and I've never been brave enough to ask Kay what she did to Steve's potatoes.

MM: Given that you're the only person in history to spend a day in Hay-on Wye, book capital of the UK and return home only with comics, how much of your record company pocket money do you now spend on them and what titles do you recommend?

Matt: When we were in Seattle recording I spent a hell of a lot on comics, I even went to the Emerald City comic book convention when I was there and met some of my favourite writers and illustrators. The love for comics has never really left me although I do find I can go a few years without picking up any. I think I spent over a thousand pounds while we were in the USA on comics and Graphic Novels. Some of my favourites? Well, 1602 is a Marvel mini series written by Neil Gaimen which is amazing, Sandman, Animal Man (the Grant Morrison years), Preacher (Garth Ennis is outstanding!), Hellblazer, Swamp Thing (Alan Moore is a genius), Daredevil (between Frank Millar and Brian Michael Bendis DD has never been better), Batman (of course!), Superman, Green Lantern (the new Rebirth mini series is phenomenal) and surprisingly the new Space Ghost mini series which blew me away!

MM: What are your thoughts on the continuing and expanding tendency for Hollywood to spend it's time raiding comics for film ideas instead of coming up with their own ideas?

Matt: I think sometimes it works and sometimes in doesn't. I remember watching that Captain America movie from the late eighties and it was terrible but the first Batman movie and the first two Superman movies were amazing, totally cool. Batman became a joke pretty much after the second movie but has since been revitalised in Batman Begins which I think is the best Batman movie and should be a guide for continuing success with the franchise. I'm looking forward to Bryan Singers take

it's got me all excited again.
Spiderman was okay but bettered by the sequel and Daredevil was disappointing. I can't say I hold much hope for the Fantastic Four but we'll see and Sin City was incredible. I enjoy the adaptations and it's always good to see the realisation of the comic panel on the big screen.

MM: Suck ups, Bastards and Hangers on... discuss.

Matt: Not worth the time the effort or the drink, we get them a lot, they should be all herded into an arena and have lions released on them or something, kind of like Gladiator.

MM: What do you miss about the pre Funeral For A Friend days?

Matt: Being a nobody, not having people thinking you're more than you are, they'll only get disappointed.

MM: Tell us about the DS13 road trip?

Matt: It was good fun going to see a thrashy hardcore band in a tiny pub in Bristol, full of supreme hardcore dudes. I remember the opening band, Spilling Blood or some rubbish, terrible, apparently supposed to be power violence but they weren't fast enough really. DS 13 came on and tore everything up, I felt that the floor was gonna fall through at one point. It was awesome, got me a t-shirt back in the times when I used to buy mediums (I'm not that big of a guy and am actually a small!).

MM: Explain the deep significance to you of ruination, and the true philosophical meaning of Aye, Aye Fishy Pie.

Matt: Ruination, everyone should try it really, it does what it says… ruins you or someone who you would like to perform ruination on I guess. I have achieved the highest accolade involved with it and am a grand master and I'm sorry but I can't give away the meaning of Ay, Ay fishy pie until society gets up to speed with me.

MM: Tell me about touring with Maiden

Matt: The scariest thing I've ever had to do was that tour, it was good fun but I totally have so much respect for the iron maiden fans, they were more hardcore than the hardcore kids, totally devoted, all they want is maiden all the time. I had a great time for two months but I wouldn't want to go through it again.

MM: Top of the Pops? What's all that about?

Matt: I'm afraid so, we succumbed to the kitsch desire to become part of social history. I used to watch it all the time as a kid and loved it but now it's basically shit, we had a great, if surreal, time on the show and we couldn't stop laughing throughout the performance. It was a laugh.

MM: What effect, if any do you think the success of funeral for a friend has had on other UK bands? What do you think it says about the mainstream music scene today?

Matt: I hope it's made bands realise that getting out and about touring and releasing records is a possibility and not out of reach. If we've inspired someone to start a band and to love music for what it really is (an amazing, expressive art form) then I'm proud of what Funeral for a Friend has achieved

MM: What's next for Funeral for a Friend?

Matt: Touring, touring and more touring. I'm currently working on a concept for a possible record based on the story behind the song Alvarez on Hours, I really want to get a linear narrative to run musically, kind of like Italian opera, there's a whole host of characters and lives that I want to express so I think it's gonna be a big undertaking, weather or not I'll get it done within Funeral for A Friend is beyond me at the moment.

MM: Any more for any more?

Matt: Of course, there's always more but as usual we can only wait for the great Randy Watson who you might remember from the 'What's going Down' Episode of That's My Momma to lead us on to greater things. Thanks for the interview and I wish Mass Movement the greatest success for the future.

CENTURY MEDIA RECORDS IS PROUD TO PRESENT

SICK OF IT ALL
DEATH TO TYRANTS
D WITH BONUS TRACK
OUT APRIL 17TH

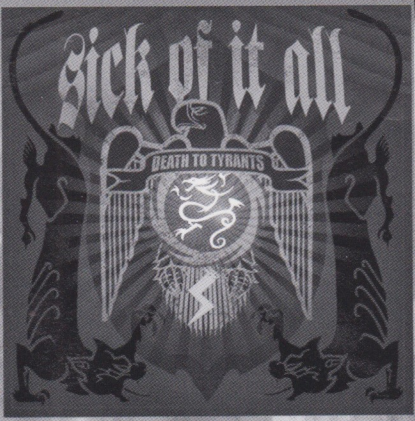
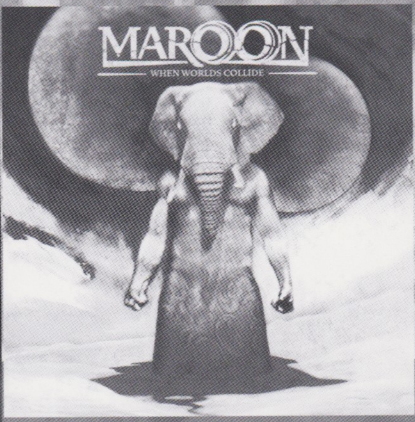

sick of it all
DEATH TO TYRANTS

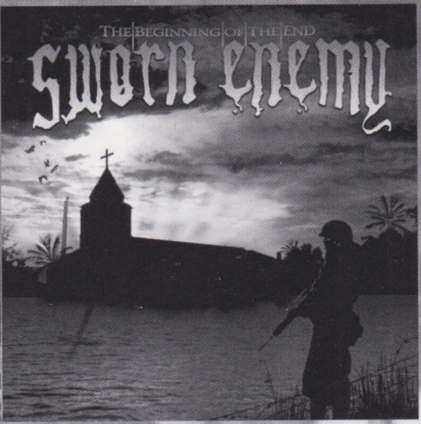
Photo: Rudy De Doncker


MAROON
WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

MAROON
WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE
CD OUT APRIL 17TH

SWORN ENEMY
THE BEGINNING OF THE END
CD OUT MAY 15TH

Photo: Dean Karr


THE BEGINNING OF THE END
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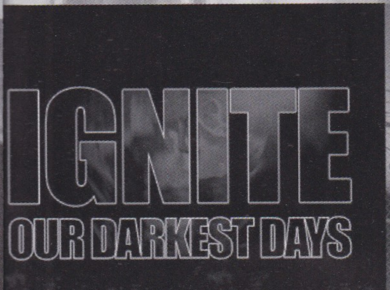
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Photo: Sean Rosenthal

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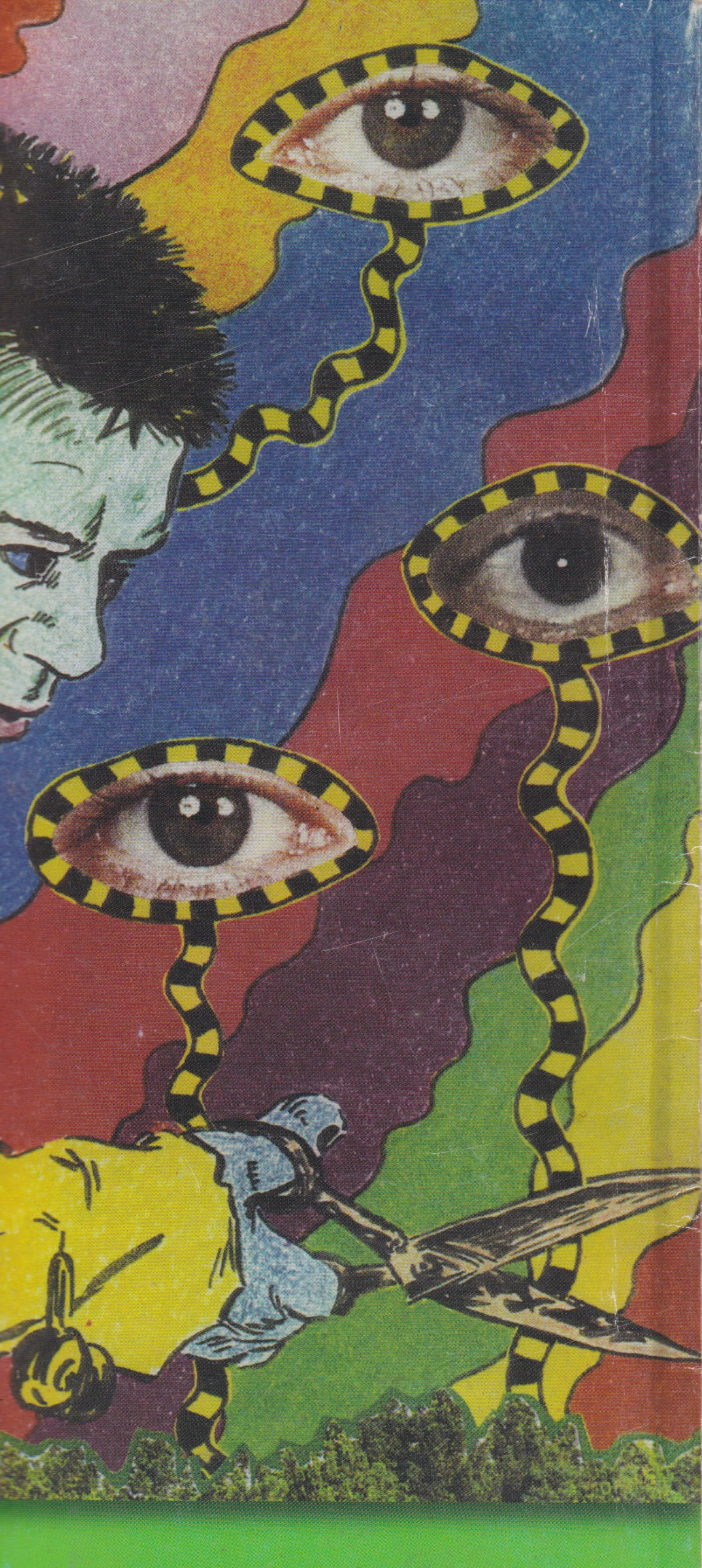
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